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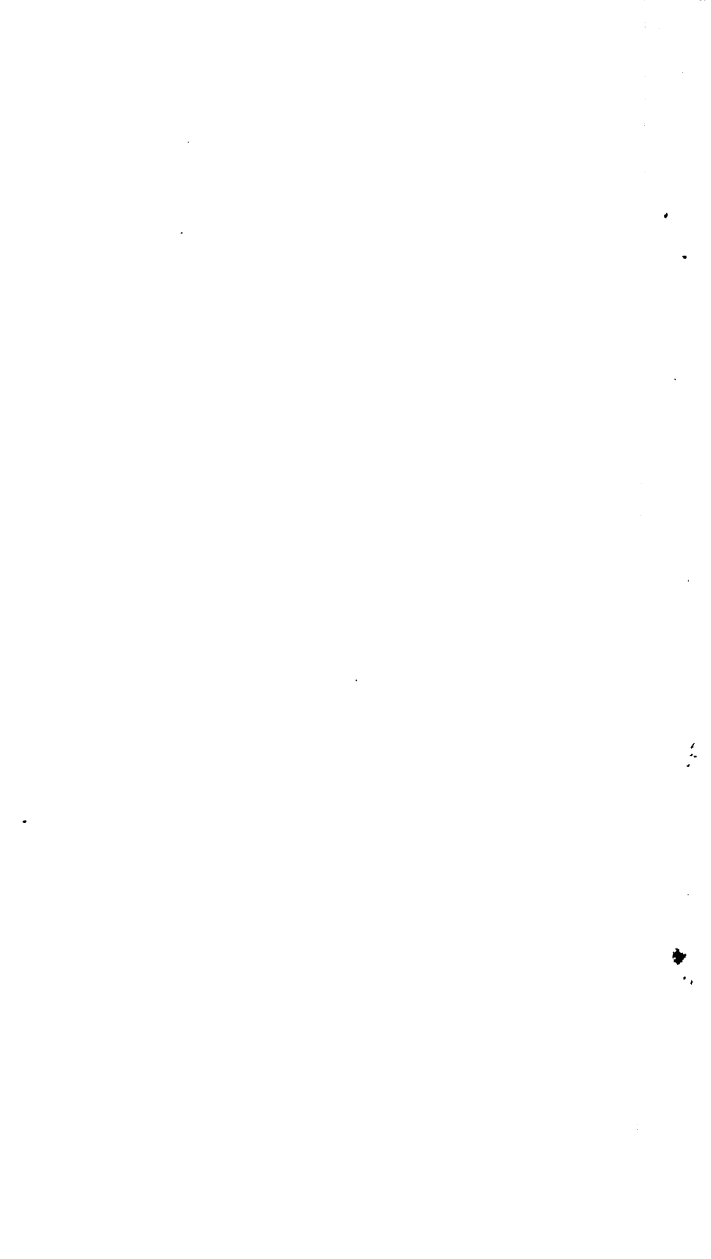
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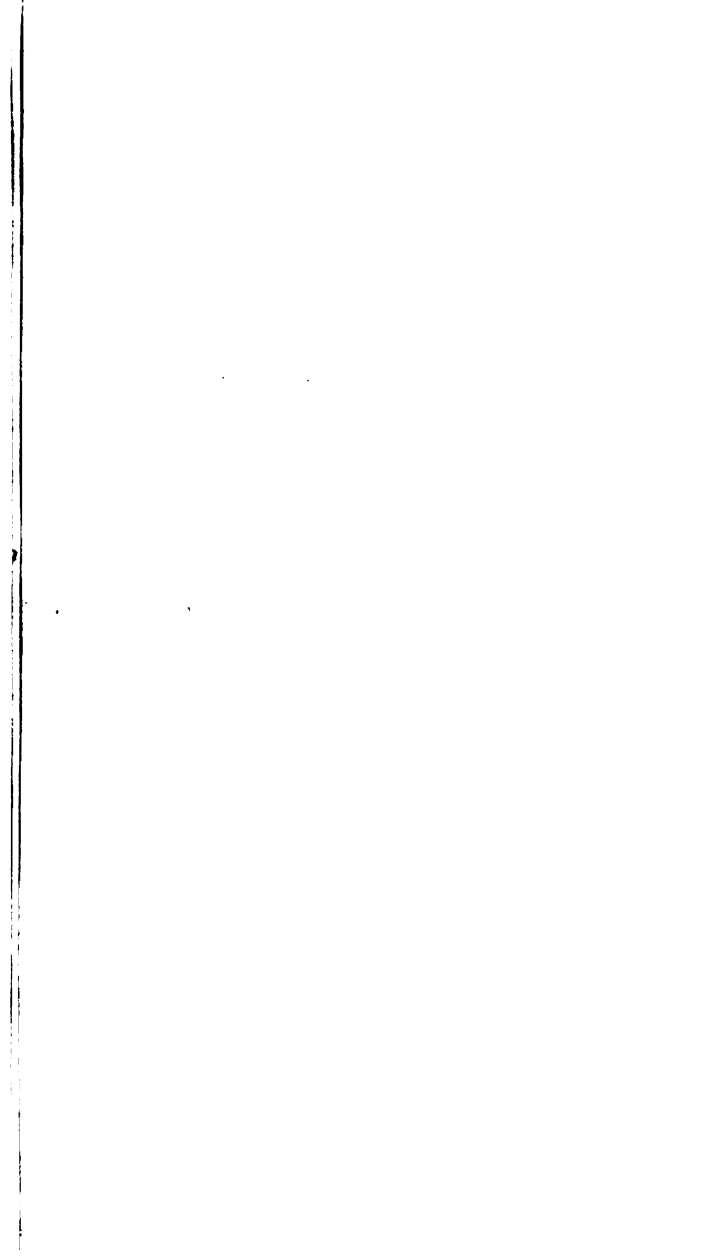


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Marmontel, Jean  
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François.

S E L E C T

TRANSLATIONS

AND

1010  
I M I T A T I O N S

FROM

THE FRENCH OF MARMONTELL AND GRESSET.

---

1009 *By an Officer of the Army ;*

WHO FOUGHT FOR AMERICA, UNDER GEN. WOLFE,  
AT THE TAKING OF QUEBEC.

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## TO THE READER.

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THE following pieces are not given as servile Translations. They are an attempt to Imitate the noble Originals, from which they are taken.

The Ordonnance of the Piece, with all the Capital Ideas are strictly adhered to : In every thing else, the spirit, and not the expression, of the Author, is studied.

NEW-YORK, March, 1801.

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# The Connoisseur outwitted ;

*A Satyr on the* BEAUX-ESPRITS.

A COMIC TALE FROM THE FRENCH OF  
MARMONTELL.

---

*“ He writes because all write, and so has still,  
Excuse for writing, and for writing ill.”*

POPE.

---

CELICOUR had been from his earliest years, what the world calls a little prodigy. At the age of fifteen he made the most gallant verses imaginable. He had celebrated all the fine women in the neighbourhood, who found still more spirit in his eyes than in his writings. They thought it a pity so many talents, and of such magnitude, should be buried in a village : Paris ought to be the theatre of them ; and they acted their part so well that his father resolved to send him there. The father was a plain man of the common size, who loved wit without having any himself, and who admired, without knowing why, every thing that came from the Capitol : He had some relations there of the

terary class ; and among his correspondents there was a certain Connoisseur, a Mr. Fintac : it was to him that Celicour was particularly recommended.

Fintac received the son of his friend with all the kindness of a patron. Sir, says he, I have often heard of you : I know you have had some reputation in the country ; but in the country, let me tell you, the arts and sciences are only in their infancy. Without *taste*, you must know, wit and genius produce nothing but monsters ; and there is *no taste but in Paris*. You must begin then by persuading yourself that you are just now born, and by forgetting every individual thing you have learnt.—What shall I not forget ! says Celicour casting his eye on a niece of eighteen that the Connoisseur had in his apartment ? Yes, sir, this is the first day of my life. I can't tell what inspiration is in this place ; but I feel faculties stirring within me which I never felt before : it seems to me I have got new senses and a new heart. Bravo ! cries Fintac, there is enthusiasm. He is born a Poet ; and by this sample I'll warrant him such. *Nascimur Poeta !*—There is no poetry in it says Celicour, it is pure nature.—So much the better ! that is the real talent. And what age might you be when you first felt this divine fire ?—Alas, sir, I had some sparks of it in the country ; but I never felt that sudden and intense flame that penetrates me till this

moment—It is the air of Paris, says Fintac.—It is the air of your house, says Celicour : I am in the temple of the muses. The Connoisseur found that the young man had a happy disposition.

Agath, the prettiest little rogue that love ever formed, did not lose a word of this conversation ; and some sly glances and a certain smile that gently moved her lips gave Celicour to understand that she had not mistaken the meaning of his responses.—I am well pleased with your father, continues the Connoisseur, for having sent you at an age when nature is docile and most susceptible of good impressions ; but beware of bad ones. You will find in Paris more false Connoisseurs than good judges. Don't consult every one ; but trust to the sagacity of one who was never deceived in any thing. Celicour, who never imagined one could praise himself so freely, had the simplicity to ask who that infallible person was ? It is I, Sir, says Fintac with an air of assurance ; I who have passed my days in the bosom of the arts and sciences ; I who have sitten in the chair these forty years, judging the works of taste and genius, and distinguishing the real beauties of composition from those that are imaginary. I say it, because it is known ; and there is no vanity in acknowledging a known fact.

However singular this language was, Celicour scarce gave any attention to it : his

thoughts were employed on a more interesting object. Agath, as I have said, had sometimes cast her eyes on him ; and her eyes seem'd to tell him the most agreeable things. But was it their natural vivacity ; or the pleasure of seeing the conquest they had made, which gave that animation ? That is just the problem Celicour longs to see demonstrated. He begs the Connoisseur to have the honor of waiting upon him often ; and Fintac very kindly invites him so to do.

In his second visit, the young man was obliged to wait till the Connoisseur was visible, and pass a quarter of an hour *tete a tete* with the amiable niece. They made him many excuses ; and he answered there was no occasion.—Sir, says Agath, my uncle is charmed with you.—That is a happiness I am very proud of ; but Mademoiselle, there is one that would flatter me still more.—My uncle, sir, assures me you are born to succeed in every thing.—I should be happy if you thought so.—I am frequently of my uncle's opinion.—Help me then to gain his favor.—It seems to me you don't want any help.—Pardon me : Great men have, almost all of them, some singularities, and sometimes foibles. To flatter their tastes, their opinions, their character, it is necessary to know them ; and to know them it is necessary to study them : now fair Agath, if you had a mind, you might shorten this study. After all, what do I ask of

you ? Is it not to gain the good will of your uncle ? Is there any thing more reasonable ? —It seems then it is the custom in the country to keep in with the nieces in order to gain the favor of the uncles ? That is no bad policy. I think it is very natural.—But if my uncle had, as you say, any singularities, any foibles ; would it be proper for me to acquaint you with them ?—Why not ? would you suspect me of making any bad use of it ?—No ; but his niece !—Well, his niece ought to wish that one would endeavor to please him. He is past the age of correcting his foibles, if he has any ; and the only way is to humor him. Upon my word, you are dextrous at removing scruples.—Ah, you would have none if you knew me better ; but no : you are deceitful.—To be sure, this is the second time I have had the honor of seeing the gentleman ; and how can I keep any secrets from him ? —Mademoiselle, I am imprudent, I acknowledge it, and I ask your pardon.—No, I am in the wrong to make you believe the matter more serious than it is. The case is this : my uncle is a plain honest man, and never would have been any thing else if they had not put it in his head to pretend to know every thing, to judge of the arts and sciences, and to be a dictator in the learned world. This hurts nobody ; but it draws upon us a multitude of Dunces whom my uncle patroni-

zes, and who share with him the ridicule of a professed wit. It were to be wished, for his quiet, that he would abandon this chimera : for the public seems resolute never to be of his opinion ; and we have every day some new farce.—I am sorry.—You are now acquainted with all our family-secrets : there is nothing hid from you. As she had done speaking, they came to acquaint him that the Connoisseur was ready to wait upon him.

The Cabinet where he was introduced bespoke a multiplicity of studies ; a deluge of learning. The floor was covered with folios heaped pell-mell on each other ; Rolls of drawings ; maps unfolded ; and manuscripts without number promiscuously scattered up and down. On a marble table Tacitus lay in state, surrounded by a number of antique medals, with a funeral lamp burning beside him. In the Eloignement, was a telescope on its carriage ; the sketch of a picture ; a model in basso relievo, and pieces of natural history ; and, from the floor to the ceiling, shelves of books lying overturned in *premeditated* confusion. The young pupil knew not where to put down his foot ; and the Connoisseur was highly diverted with his uneasiness. You must excuse the disorder in which you find me : this is my literary closet : I want all these things at my hand ; but you must not imagine that the same disorder reigns in my Pericranium : every thing *there*

is in its proper place, I can assure you : neither variety, nor the infinity of number breeds any confusion there !—That is wonderful, says Celicour, who knew not what he spoke, for his thoughts were otherwise employed. O very wonderful, says Fintac ; and I am often astonished when I reflect on the curious mechanism of the human brain. It seems to me that Grand Repository must contain Cabinets for the reception of every species of knowledge, ~~with~~ separate and distinct apartments for the accommodation and entertainment of every idea from the very moment of its conception. If it was not so ; how is it possible, amidst that chaos of notions that have passed through my brain, that I could lay my finger, as it were, on what I had read of the return of the last comet, at the very nick of time ? for you must know it was I that gave the hint to our Astronomers.---You, Sir ?—They did not so much as dream of it ; and had it not been for me, that comet had travelled through our horizon incognito. You may believe I did not brag of it : I only tell it you as a friend. But why would you allow them to rob you of the glory of such an important discovery.---Psha ! it would be an endless work to reclaim every thing that is stolen from me. In general, child, you must know that the solution of a problem, a new discovery, a piece of painting, poetry, or eloquence belongs but seldom to

him who passes for the author of it. But what is the object of a Connoisseur? Why, to encourage genius at the same time he enlightens it. Whether the idea of this basso relievo, the ordonnance of this picture, the general or particular beauties of this dramatic piece belongs to me or to the artist is a matter of pure indifference to the progress of the art: now this is the sole point I aim at. They come to me, I give them my advice; they listen to it and make their own use of it: I am amply rewarded when they succeed.— Nothing can be more glorious, says Celicour: the Arts ought to look upon you as their Apollo; and Mademoiselle Agath as their Muse. Alas, sir, my niece is a hair-brain'd creature: I meant to give her a learned education; but she has no taste for study. I had prevailed on her to look into History: but she soon returned my books, telling me it was not worth while to read such stories; to see in all ages and nations, a set of illustrious madmen, and audacious rogues making game of a parcel of fools. I wanted to try if eloquence might suit her genius better: She owns that Cicero and Demosthenes were excellent jugglers; but when one has reason on his side, what occasion is there, says she, for so many words? As to morality, she maintains she knows it all by heart; and that Lucas, her foster-father, is as wise a man as Socrates. There is nothing I can see that

amuses her but Poetry sometimes ; yet she will often prefer fables to the most sublime poems : she will tell you, without a blush, that she would rather hear Esop and Fontain's animals talk than Virgil and Homer's heroes. In a word, she is as much a child at eighteen as others are at twelve ; and in the midst of the most serious and interesting discourses, you would be surprised to see her amuse herself with a trifle, or grow dull when you want to fix her attention. Celicour, inwardly smiling, took leave of Fintac who graciously invited him to dinner next day.

The young man was so overjoyed that he slept none that night. To dine with Agath must be the happiest day of his life. He comes according to appointment : and by his beauty, his youth, and the air of serenity that shone in his countenance, one might have taken him for Apollo, if Fintac's Parnassus had been under better regulations ; but as he only wanted pupils and sycophants, none frequented his house but creatures of that stamp.

He introduced Celicour as a young poet of great hopes, and placed him at table on his right hand. From that moment, all the eyes of envy were fixed on him. Every one of the guests imagined he saw him usurp his place, and swore in the bottom of his heart to be revenged by running down the first work he should publish. In the mean ti

Cellicour was graciously received and careffed by these gentlemen, and took them from that moment for the best people in the world. A new comer was a spur to emulation ; and the Bel Esprit crouded all its sail. They passed sentence on the Republic of Letters : and as it is just and necessary to perfume criticism with a little incense, they generally praised all the dead ; while they shewed no mercy to any of the living, that is to say, the living who had not the honor of being at this dinner. It was a settled point with them, that all the new publications, that had succeeded without being reviewed by Fintac, could only enjoy a momentary fame, like those hasty productions of nature, that spring up in a night and die before the setting sun ; while those that had passed the great seal of his approbation would certainly be transmitted to the latest posterity, whatever the present age might say of them. They run over every species of literature ; and to give the greater scope to erudition and criticism, this new question was brought on the tapis : *which is the greater poet Corneille or Racine ?* A great many fine things had been said on the subject ; when the little niece, who had not spoke a word, took it in her head to ask this simple but unlucky question : *which of the two fruits has the more exquisite relish, the Orange or the Peach ?* Her uncle blush'd at her simplicity, and the guests looked down without deigning

to answer such an impertinence. My niece, says Fintac, young ladies at your age ought to hear and not to speak. Agath, with an imperceptible smile, lookt at Celicour, whose silent approbation amply compensated the contempt of the company. I had forgot to tell you that he was placed over against her; and you may readily imagine he listened but very little to what was said on either side of him. But the Connoisseur, who observed his physiognomy, found a singular animation in it. Look, says he to the Beaux Esprits, how catching genius is.—Yes, answers one of them, you can see it transpire like water thro' the pores of the Elypile—Fintac, taking Celicour by the hand, says to him: there is a comparison for you! It is *philosophy* dissolved in a poetic *menstruum*; the *quintessence* of it. It is thus the arts mutually support each other, and the muses walk hand in hand. You must own, continues he, you have no such society in your country towns. Well, you see nothing: there are some days when these gentlemen have ten times as much wit. How can we help having it, says one of them: We are at the fountain head; *et purpureo bibimus ore nectar*.—Ah, *purpureo*! says Fintac with great modesty, you do me much honor. Listen, young man, and learn to quote. The young man was very attentive, to watch the glances of the niece, who thought him very handsome.

After dinner the company went to take a

walk in a garden where the Connoisseur had made a rare collection of those exotics that are commonly to be found in our kitchen gardens. There was among other curiosities, a CABBAGE of *many colors*, which was the admiration of naturalists. Its curls and festoons, and the beautiful mixture and variety of its tints was most astonishing. Let me see, says Fintac, a plant of foreign growth that nature has formed with more care and delicacy. It was to revenge Europe of the prejudice of our Virtuosi, who admire every thing that comes from the East and West-Indies, that I was at the pains to preserve this beautiful cabbage.

While they were admiring this prodigy of nature, Agath and Celicour had met as by accident in a neighboring alley. Fair Agath, says he, showing her a rose, will you let this flower die on the stalk?—Where would you have it to die?—Where I would wish to die myself.—Agath blushed at this answer; and at that instant her uncle with two of the Beaux esprits came to sit down in an arbour from whence they could hear them without being perceived. If it is true, continues Celicour, that souls pass from one body to another, I should wish after my death to be a rose like this. If any profane hand dares approach me, I will shrink back and hide myself among the thorns; but if a fair lady deigns to look on me, I will turn  
 \* I will open my bosom: I will

exhale my perfumes and mix them with her more aromatic breath: the desire of pleasing her will give fresh animation to my colors.—Well, you'll do so much that you'll be pluck'd, and there will be an end of you.—Ah, Mademoiselle, do you reckon as nothing the pleasure of being one moment . . . ? His eyes spoke the rest.—And I, says Agath, were I to chuse, should wish to be chang'd into a Dove: it is sweetness and innocence itself.—You might have added love and fidelity too: yes, fair Agath, that is a choice worthy of yourself. The Dove is the bird of Venus: she would distinguish you amidst a thousand doves; and you would be the ornament of her chariot: Love would repose on your wings, or rather warm you in his bosom; and on his heavenly lip your little bill would taste ambrosia. Agath interrupted him, saying he carried his fictions too far.—One word more, says Celicour: a Dove must have a mate; and if you were to chuse yours, what soul would you give it?—That of a female friend. At these words Celicour gave her a look mixed with love, grief, and resentment.

Very well, says the uncle starting up, very well! that is most excellent poetry. The image of the Rose is a coloring worthy *Van-hausen*; that of the Dove is a miniature in the taste of *Bouchet*: it is love and beauty. *Ut pictura poesis*. Bravo, child, bravo! the

allegory is well supported: we shall make something of you. Agath, I was very well pleased with your dialogue; and Mr. de Lexergue, here, was as much taken with it as I. —It is certain, says Mr. de Lexergue, in Mademoiselle's language, there is something truly anacreontic: it is the impression of her uncle's taste; every thing that comes from him is mark'd with the genuine stamp of antiquity. Mr. Lucid found in the fictions of Celicour the *molle atq. facetum*. You must finish this little scene, says Fintac; you must put it in verse: it will be one of the finest things we have seen. Celicour said he could not finish it without the help of Agath; and that the dialogue might be more easy and natural, they thought proper to leave them together.—The Dove, your mate, must have the soul of a female friend! says Celicour. Ah, fair Agath, was your heart made only for friendship? Was it for the sake of friendship that Love took a pleasure to adorn you with so many accomplishments?—Well, says Agath, your dialogue I think is already begun: if I can but find a proper repartee, you will have matter enough to carry you a great way in your poetical flight. If you please, says Celicour, it is easy to abridge it.—Psha! let us talk of something else. How did you like your entertainment at dinner?—I heard but one word of sense, and that was taken for a childish impertinence; the rest I have for-

got. My soul was not at my ear.—It was very happy.—Very happy indeed! for it was at my eyes --If I had a mind I might pretend not to understand, or not to believe you; but I am no pretender. I think it very natural, begging pardon of our *beaux-esprits*, that you took more pleasure in seeing me than hearing them; and I own to you I am not ill pleased to have one I can speak to, if it is only with my eyes, to save me from the tediousness of their nonsense. We are now acquainted, and we shall have sport enough; for I can assure you we have got some originals droll enough in their kind. For example, this Mr. Lucid always fancies he sees in things what nobody ever saw but himself. It seems as if nature had whispered her secrets in his ear; but all the world an't worthy to know his thoughts. He chuses in a company a privileged confident: that is commonly the person of the greatest distinction: he leans mysteriously on him and tells his opinion in a whisper. As for Mr. de Lexergue, he is a *Luminary* of the first magnitude: full of contempt for every thing that is modern, he esteems things in proportion to their age. He wants even a young lady to have an air of antiquity; and he honors me with his attention, because he says I am the profile of the Empress Popea. In that group you see below, there is a starched, perpendicular piece of formality who makes pretty little nothings to

admiration ; but it is not every one who has the privilege of hearing them. He demands a day for the rehearsal : he names his auditory : and shuts the door against every profane intruder ; then coming a tip-toe, and placing himself before a table between two flam-beaux, he draws out mysteriously a rose-colored pocket book, casts around a gracious look demanding attention, introduces a little romance, of his composing, that has had the honor to please some persons of distinction, and reads it deliberately even to the last page, without perceiving that every one of his auditors is fast asleep with his eyes open. Dont you see that little man so full of action, who gesticulates before him ? You can't imagine how much I am some times in pain for him. Wit seems to tantalize him like those fits of sneezing that always threaten without effect. You can see he has an insuperable ambition to say fine things : he has them at the tip of his tongue ; but they always escape him at the moment of utterance. Poor man, how much is he to be pitied ! That tall, maigre personage you see walking by himself is the most abstruse and hollow genius I ever knew. Because he has got the vapors and a full bottom'd wig, he imagines himself an English philosopher : he will expatiate, for hours on the wing of a fly ; and he is so obscure in his ideas that one is sometimes almost tempted to believe him a man of deep learning.

While Agath was indulging her fancy in drawing these caricatures, Celicour had his eyes fixed on hers. Ah, says he, how little does your uncle, who knows many things, comprehend the wit of his niece. He makes you pass for a child. To be sure he does ; and these gentlemen look upon you as such : they are not bashful neither : the *esprit*, in all its extravagance, is its element with me. But don't you betray me. No fear : but fair Agath, you and I must found our acquaintance on something more resting than friendship.—You wrong friendship Celicour ; there may be something firmer ; but there can be nothing more solid.

At these words the company came to interrupt them ; and the Connoisseur taking a solitary walk with Celicour asked him if his Dialogue was in forwardness.—It is not precisely what I could wish, says he ; but I try to correct it.—I am sorry says Finta that I have interrupted you. There is nothing difficult to recover as the thread of narrative when once it slips through one's fingers. It is very likely that giddy hare-brained girl has not seized your idea properly. She has fine times lucid intervals ; but in a moment she is all dissipation. It is to be hoped however that matrimony will improve her. What do you think of marrying her ? says Celicour in a trembling voice. Yes, and I depend

on you to celebrate that feast in a worthy manner. You have seen Mr. de Lexergue : he is a man of great sense and profound erudition. It is to him I give my niece. Had Fintac observed Celicour's physiognomy now, he must have seen him turn pale at this news. You must think, continues he, that a person so serious and so immersed in study as Mr. de Lexergue, wants something to amuse him. He is rich—he has taken a liking to the child : and in eight days they are to be married ; but he wants it to be kept a profound secret, and my niece herself knows nothing of it as yet. As to you, its necessary you should be initiated in the mystery of a union which your Lyre is to celebrate. O Hymen ! you understand me ? It is an *epithalamium* I want of you. Now is the time to signalize yourself.—Ah, sir, pardon me.—None of your modesty ; modesty is the murderer of genius ; it smothers it in the birth. You must really excuse me sir—no excuses : you are able to execute it ; its a piece exactly suited to your taste, and consequently must do you great honor. My niece is young and handsome, and with a little spirit and imagination one can never flag on such a subject. As to the husband, I have already told you he is a superior man. As an antiquary, he is without an equal ; he has a cabinet of medals which he values at forty thousand crowns. He was going to view the ruins of Herculanium, and was

even within an ace of undertaking a journey to Palmyra. You see how many fine images this presents to poetry. But what do I say? you are musing on it already: yes, I see in your countenance that profound meditation which broods over the embryo of genius, and disposes them for approaching life. Go quickly; go and improve such precious moments: I myself am going to wrap myself up in contemplation.

Confounded at what he had heard, Celi-cour glowed with impatience to see Agath. The next morning, under pretence of consulting the Connoisseur, and before entering into his closet, he enquired for her.

Ah, Mademoiselle, says he, you see a man in despair. What is the matter with you? I am undone, you are going to marry Mr. de Lexergue.—Who told you that fine story? Who? Mr. Fintac himself.—In good earnest?—He has employed me to write your *epithalamium*. Well. I hope you'll make us a fine one. You laugh! you are well pleased to have Mr. de Lexergue for a husband? O to be sure; nothing could please me better. Ah, cruel woman—in pity to one that adores and loves you! Agath interrupted him as he was falling on his knees. You must own, says she, that these lunatic moments are very proper for a declaration: as he that makes them is out of his senses; she that hears them cannot be offended: and under favor of such frantic fits.

love may risk every thing. But fair and softly ; come to yourself a little, and let us hear what makes you so desperate.—It is your cheerfulness, cruel woman. And would you have me be sorry for a misfortune I'm no ways afraid of ? I tell you its a settled point that you are to be married to Lexergue.—And why will you have it settled without me, a thing that can't be ended without me ? But if your uncle has given his word ?—Well, if he has given it, he may take it back. What, would you have the courage ? The courage not to say yes ? a mighty resolution truly !—Ah, I am overjoyed ! and your joy is as foolish as your grief.—Why ? you wont have Lexergue. Well, and what then ? You will have me. Most certainly, the consequence is infallible ; and every lady that don't marry Mr. de Lexergue, must marry you, that is a clear point. In truth, sir, you reason like a country poet. Go, go and see my uncle, and take care he don't know a syllable of what you have told me.

Well, says the Connoisseur, as he saluted him, how does the *epithalamium* come on ? Why, I have got the design of it in my head. Let us hear—I have taken the allegory of time espousing truth. The idea is fine, but rather melancholy ; besides time is very old. Well, Mr. Lexergue you know is an antiquary.—Yes ; but a man marrying a young wife don't like to be called as old as time. Would

Do you rather have the nuptials of Vulcan and Venus? No, no, the adventure of Mars is rather disagreeable. In ruminating upon it, you may strike out some more happy idea. But apropos, will you go with us this evening to the performance of a son of Vulcan under my protection? It is some Chinese sky-rockets of which I have given him the composition, putting in as usual, something of my own. Celicour doubted not but Agath would be of the party, and he took care to be there.

The spectators were already placed; Fintac and his niece had taken possession of a window, and there was still a little room beside Agath, which she had kept on purpose: Celicour with great modesty slipped in, rejoicing to see himself so happily situated. The eyes of the uncle were taken up in following the flight of the rockets; those of Celicour were fixed on the niece; the stars might have fallen from heaven before he would have observed them. His hand met on the window a hand softer than the down which covers the flowers of spring. The hand he gently touched scarce made a faint attempt to withdraw, when his made one to detain it: Agath turned upon him with a look that meant to check him with a frown; but reading submission in his eyes, it was half a smile. She felt she would grieve him in withdrawing her hand; and, whether from

love or pity she let it rest. Agath's hand was shut, and Celicour had the boldness to open it. But what was his joy and surprise when he found it yield insensibly to that soft violence ! He holds her open hand in his, and amorously presses it. He had the audacity to lay it on his fluttering heart, which advances to meet it. With what rapidity did Celicour's heart beat against that timorous hand which seemed endowed with a magnetic virtue ! The joys they felt, no tongue can tell, no language can express, nor can it be conceived, save by the happy few whose tender hearts have felt the power of that resistless passion ; whose strength can only be measured by its delicacy. When the fire-wheel made its explosion in the air, the eyes of these lovers darted far other and more congenial fires, which languishingly meet and intermix harmonious ; and when the gaping crowd, in shouts of applause, were expressing their admiration of the sky-rockets, the burning sighs of our lovers expressed, in more emphatic language, the pain they felt at parting. Such was this mute scene, a specimen of eloquent silence.

From this moment their hearts in perfect unison, had no longer any secret for each other. Both of them tasted, for the first time, the pleasure of loving ; that flower of sensibility which springs as it were from the pure essence of the soul. But love, which

takes a tincture from the personal character; was bashful and serious in Celiconr ; in Agath, lively, chearful and roguish.

But now the day appointed, for proclaiming her marriage with Mr. de Lexergue, arrives. The antiquary comes to see her, finds her alone, and makes a formal declaration of his love, founded on the consent of her uncle. Agath, in a jocosè manner tells him :— I know, sir, you love me in profile ; but, for my part, I want a husband I can love face to face ; and to tell you plainly you an't the man. You have got, you say, my uncle's consent ; but I hope you won't marry me without my own ; and I think I may assure you that you never shalt have that. It was in vain for Lexergue to protest to her, that in his eyes she re-united all the beauties of the Venus of Medicis : Agath wished him every Venus of antiquity ; but declared she was none of them. You have your choice, says she, either to expose me to my uncle's resentment, or spare me that uneasiness. If you lay this rupture to my charge, you distress me ; you will oblige me, in taking it upon yourself ; and the best thing one can do when he is not beloved, is to try not to be hated. I am your most humble servant.

The antiquary was mortally offended at this unexpected repulse ; but he would undoubtedly have sacrificed his resentment to save his pride, or rather his vanity ; if the

reproach of breaking his word with the uncle had not extorted a confession. Fintac, whose authority and consideration were at stake, was highly incensed at the resistance of his niece, and did every thing in his power to overcome it ; but all he could get from her was, that she was no antique ; so he left her, declaring in his wrath, that she should never have another husband. This was not the only obstacle in the way of our lovers. Celicour had nothing to expect but a small portion of a very small inheritance ; and Agath depended entirely upon her uncle, who was now less than ever disposed to denude himself in her favor. In more happy circumstances, he might have taken upon himself the charge of their small family ; but after the refusal of Agath, nothing less than a miracle could have induced him to it ; this miracle was wrought by love.

Flatter my uncle, says Agath to Celicour ; intoxicate him with praises, and carefully conceal our love from him. For this purpose, let us above all things avoid being seen together : content yourself with informing me of your conduct *enpassant*. Fintac did not conceal from Celicour his resentment against his niece. Is it possible says he, she can have any secret inclination ? If I but knew that— But no ; she is an insipid little animal that loves nothing, that feels nothing. Ah, if she reckons on my estate, she is very much

mistaken ; I know better how to bestow my favors. The young man, frightened at the menaces of the uncle, sought an opportunity to inform the niece. She only laugh'd at them.—He is terribly enraged against you, my dear Agath. I don't care for that. He talks of disinheriting you. Well, say you as he says : gain his confidence, and let love and time work. Celicour followed the prudent counsel of Agath ; and at every encomium he gave Fintac, our Connoisseur discovered in him a new degree of merit. The justness of thought, the penetration of this youth is beyond example at his years, would he say to his friends. In a word, the confidence he placed in him was such, that he thought he might safely trust him with what he called the secret of his life ; it was a dramatic performance he had composed, but never read to any body for fear of risking his reputation. After having demanded inviolable secrecy, he appointed a day for the reading of it. At this news Agath was overjoyed ; the physick, says she, begins to operate : take courage—re-double the dose of incense ; good or bad, this piece must be with you a nonpareil.

Fintac finding himself tête à tête with Celicour, having shut the door of his closet and double lock'd it, draws from a strong box this precious manuscript, and reads, with

enthusiasm, the dullest and most insipid comedy that ever was written. It went cruelly against the grain with his pupil to applaud such wretched stuff; but Agath had recommended it; he did applaud, and the Connoisseur was transported. You must acknowledge, says he, after reading it, you must acknowledge this is fine.—Yes indeed, cries Celicour, it is truly inimitable! Well, says Fintac, reassuming his gravity and stroking his beard with an air of importance, it is now time, young man, that I should tell you the reason why I have made choice of you for my sole confidant. You must know then, that, for some years past, I have had a violent itching to see this piece on the stage; but I don't want it should appear under my name. Celicour trembled at these words. I have never as yet found a person I could trust; but now I think you worthy of this mark of my friendship. You shall publish this work as your own: I want nothing but the pleasure of its success, and you shall have all the glory. The idea of imposing on the public was of itself enough to have startled the young man; but that of seeing such a pitiful performance published and condemned under his name, went still more against his stomach.—Confounded at the proposition, he struggled for a long time, but his resistance was in vain. My secret entrusted with you, says Fintac, engages you in honor to grant my request.

It is the same thing to the public whether a work belongs to you or to me, and this officious lie can hurt nobody. My piece is my own property ; I make it over to you, and the remotest posterity, you may believe me, will never be able to find it out. Here you see your delicacy guarded in every respect. If, after this, you refuse to publish this work as your own, I shall have reason to believe you have a bad opinion of it ; that the praises you have given it are only deceitful ; and consequently that you are equally unworthy of my friendship and esteem. What would not the lover of Agath have consented to rather than incur the displeasure of her uncle ? he assured him that he had not declined the honor proposed to him but from the most laudable motives, and desired twenty-four hours to consider of it. He has read it to me says he to Agath.—Well—well ! it is bad enough, —I expected as much. He wants I should bring it on the stage under my name. What did you say ? He wants that I should pass for the author of it. Ah, Celicour I thank heaven for this adventure. Have you accepted of it ? No, not yet ; but I am afraid I shall be forced to it. So much the better ! I tell you it is detestable. So much the better still. It must certainly be damned.—So much the better, I tell you ; you must agree to every thing. Celicour did not close his eyes all night for grief and vexation. Next

morning he waited on the uncle, and told him there was nothing but he would consent to rather than displease him. I don't mean, says the Connoisseur, to expose you imprudently. Copy the piece with your own hand ; you shall read it to our friends, who are excellent judges ; and if they don't think its success infallible, you are free from your engagement. I only ask one thing of you ; to study it, that you may read it to advantage. This precaution gave Celicour some hopes. The next time he waited on Agath, I am going, says he, to read the piece to his friends ; if they find it bad, he will excuse me from publishing it. They will find it good, and so much the better ; if they find it bad, we are undone. Explain yourself ? Begone, Celicour, we must not be seen together.

What she foresaw actually happened. The judges being assembled, the Connoisseur introduced this piece as a prodigy, especially in a young poet. The young poet read it as well as he could ; and after Fintac's example ; they were in raptures at every verse ; they applauded every scene. At the conclusion, there was nothing to be heard but clapping of hands. They found in it all the delicacy of Aristophanes, the elegance of Plautus, the comic humor of Terence ; and they did not know any piece of Moliere or Shakespear fit to be compared with it. The comedians were not altogether of the same opinion.

with our *beaux-esprits* ; but every body knew these folks were people of *no taste*, and it was ordered to be acted. Agath, who was present at the reading, applauded with all her might ; there were even some pathetic places where she appeared in tears ; and her enthusiasm for the work had in some measure reconciled her with the author. Is it possible, says Celicour, you could find any thing good in it ?—Excellent, says she ; excellent for us ; and at these words she darted out of the room without speaking a word more.

During the time this piece was under rehearsal, Fintac run from house to house to dispose the minds of the people in favor of a young poet of great expectation. At last the important day arrives. The Connoisseur assembles his friends to dinner. Come, gentlemen, says he, support your work ; you have found the piece admirable ; you have warranted its success ; and your honor is now at stake. As for me, you all know my weakness ; I have the tenderness of a father for a poet in labor ; I feel every pain he suffers in these critical and terrible moments.

After dinner, the Connoisseur's good friends tenderly embraced Celicour, and told him they were a going to the pit to be the spectators rather than the instruments of his triumph. They went there to his *woful experience* ; the piece was *acted*, but never *finished* ;

and the first signal of impatience was given by *these good friends*.

Fintac was in the amphitheatre trembling and pale as death. But, during the representation, this unhappy father made incredible efforts to induce the spectators to compassionate his tender offspring. At last he saw it expire ; when yielding to grief, he was carried home in his coach more dead than alive, and breathing out complaints to heaven that ever he had been born in such a barbarous age. And where was poor Celicour all this time ? Alas ! they had granted him the honors of the LAUREAT's BOX, where, on a cushion of thorns, he had seen what was called *his piece* tremble in the *first*, waver in the *second*, and fall headlong in the *third act* ! Fintac had promised to take him up, and had forgot him. What shall become of him ? How shall he escape through this multitude, who cannot fail to know him, and point him out with the finger ? At last, seeing the house empty, and the lights extinguished, he took courage and came down ; but the chimney corners, the galleries and stair case, were still full : his confusion betrayed him ; and he could hear on every hand :—It is he, to be sure, yes, there he is ; it is he. Poor devil ! its a pity ! he'll do better perhaps another time. He discovered in a corner by their pale and meagre looks, a group of reprobate authors. who, with a ghastly smile enjoyed the

misery of their new companion. He saw also Fintac's good friends, who, on sight of him, turned their back. Full of shame and sorrow, he went to the real author, and his first care was to call for Agath: he had full liberty to see her, for the uncle had shut himself up in his closet. I told you so, says Celicour, throwing himself down in an easy chair; it is *damn'd beyond redemption, and consigned to everlasting infamy!* So much the better, says Agath. What, so much the better! when your lover is covered with shame, and made the table talk and derision of all Paris?—Ah, Mademoiselle, this is too much; this is no time to laugh. I love you more than life, but in this state of humiliation you now see me, I am ready to part with life; I had almost said to part with you. I know not what kept me from divulging the secret. It is not enough to expose me to public contempt; but your cruel uncle abandons me. I know him, he will be the first to blush at seeing me again, and what I have done to obtain you will perhaps forever exclude me from the most distant hopes of it. But let him prepare to take back his fine piece, or give me your hand; there is nothing else can comfort me; nothing else can stop my mouth. Heaven is my witness that had his comedy succeeded, though a thing impossible, I would have given him the honor of it: it is fallen, and I bear the shame; but it is an effort of love that

alone can reward. I must confess, says the roguish Agath, it is something cruel to be *damn'd for another person*. So cruel that I would not act the part for my own father.— With what an air of contempt too one looks down on a wretch who has been hissed off the stage? Contempt is just *Mademoiselle*, and one may put up with it, but the insolent pity of *pretended friends*, there is the mortification! I dare say you was a little out of countenance when you came down the stairs.— Pray did you salute the ladies? I could have wished myself annihilated. Poor man! how will you dare then to appear in the world again? I never shall appear in the world, I swear to you, till I appear in the character of your husband, or till I have put the saddle on the right horse. . . You are resolved then my uncle's back shall go to the wall? Firmly resolved, you may take my word upon it.— He shall decide the point this very night. If he refuse to give me your hand, every journal in Paris shall proclaim him the author of that *damn'd comedy*. . . That is just what I wanted, says Agath, clapping her hands in triumph. Now sir, I hope you understand the meaning of my favorite phrase, *so much the better*, that used to provoke you so much. Go and see my uncle, stand to it, and be assured we shall be happy.

Well, sir, addressing himself to the Connoisseur, what do you say to it now? I say,

my friend, that the public is a stupid animal; and you and I ought to labor no longer to please it. But comfort yourself, your work does you great honor with people of taste. What do you call *my work*, sir, I think it is *your work*! Don't speak so loud, my dear child, don't speak so loud.—It is very easy for you, sir, to be moderate, who have prudently flipt your neck out of the collar, but I who am choak'd by it——Ah, don't imagine such an accident can hurt you; men of judgment and penetration have discovered in this work evident marks of genius. No, sir, don't flatter me; the piece is *abominable*; I have dearly purchased a right to speak freely of it, and every body is of my opinion. Had it succeeded, I should have declared you the author of it; had it fallen only in part, I should have placed it to my account, but such a disaster as this is above my strength, and I desire you would take it on yourself. On *me* child! at my time of life to make myself so ridiculous? to lose in one day a reputation that has been the labor of forty years, and is now the only consolation of my old age? Can you be so *cruel* as desire it? And can you be so *cruel* as to make me the victim of my complaisance? You know very well what it has cost me. I know the obligations I am under to you; but my dear Celicour, you are young, you have time enough to take your revenge; and one lucky hit will cancel this

misfortune : in the name of friendship- then bear it patiently ; with tears in my eyes I beg it of you. Well, I consent to it ; but I am too sensible of the consequence of a *faux pas* at starting to expose myself to the prejudice it always leaves behind it. I solemnly renounce the *stage* ; I renounce *poetry* and the *belle-lettres*. You are very much in the right child ; a young man at your age has so many other resources. I have only *one resource*, sir, and it depends upon *you* ! speak then, for every thing in my power is at your service ; do but name it. Your NIECE, SIR ! What ! Agath ? yes, I adore her ; and it was she who, to please you, made me consent to every thing you proposed. Is my niece then in the secret ? Yes sir—Ah, her impudence perhaps has discovered all, and we are undone. Let her come here this moment.

Agath was called and strictly examined ; and the uncle finding that she had inviolably kept the secret, cheerfully gave her hand to Celicour, who accepted it with transports of joy. Fintac, having no children of his own, made them his joint heirs, and was from that moment *happily cured of his passion for the BELLE LETTRES*.

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# A D E L A I D E :

OR,

## *The Shepherdess of the Alps.*

A TALE FROM THE FRENCH OF  
M A R M O N T E L L.

—:~:—  
*“The grief which musing pity pays,  
And fond remembrance loves to raise.”*

COLLENS.

—\*—  
**I**N the mountains of Savoy, not far from the road as you go from Briançon to Modena, is a solitary valley, whose aspect inspires the traveller with a pleasing melancholy. Three hills rising in form of an amphitheatre, with a few stragling cottages of shepherds, cascades falling from the mountains, and here and there a group of trees interspersed with pasturages ever green, are the ornaments of this rural scene.

The Marchioness of Fontrose was returning from France into Italy with her husband, their carriage broke by the way, and the day being far spent, they were obliged to seek

in this valley, an âsylum for the night. As they advanced towards one of the cottages they perceived a flock of sheep taking that road, conducted by a shepherdess, whose appearance astonished them. As they drew near, they heard a heavenly voice, whose plaintive and moving accents were repeated by the solitary echos.

‘O sun, how sweetly smiles thy setting beams ! ’tis thus the weary soul, when she has run her painful race, takes a sweet leave ; rejoicing thus to bath herself, and to renew her youth in the pure source of immortality. But O how distant is the term ! how tedious are the lazy hours of life !” As she spoke thus, the shepherdess passed our travellers in a stooping posture ; but the negligence of her attitude seemed only to give more dignity to her shape and gait.

Struck with what they saw, and more with what they had just heard, the Marquis and his lady doubled their pace to come up with the shepherdess they so much admired. But what was their surprise, when under a plain cap, and the most homely dress, they saw an assemblage of every female beauty, and every grace ! my child, says the Marchioness, seeing she meant to shun them, don’t be afraid ; we are travellers that an accident obliges to seek in these cottages a shelter till morning : will you please to be our guide ? I am sorry for you, madam, says the shepherdess, look-

ing down and blushing ; these cottages are inhabited by poor creatures, and you will be ill lodged.—You lodge there yourself, I suppose, says the Marchioness ; and I may put up for a night with the inconveniences you suffer every day.—I am born for that says the shepherdes with great modesty. No, certainly, says Fontrose, who could no longer dissemble his emotion ; no, you are not born to suffer : and fortune is very cruel ! Is it possible, amiable creature, that so many charms should be buried in this desert under that dress ?—Fortune, sir, says Adelaide, is never cruel but when she takes from us what she has given us. My condition has its pleasures for one who knows no better ; and custom has given you wants that we shepherds know nothing of. It may be so, says the Marquis, with those whom heaven has placed in that obscure condition ; but you my lovely creature, whom I cannot behold but with wonder and admiration ; you was never born what you would seem to be : that air, that gait, that voice, that language, every thing betrays you : two words you just now spoke, discover a noble soul, a mind cultivated by education. Go on, and tell us what misfortune could have reduced you to this mortifying situation. For a man in misfortune, says Adelaide, there are a thousand resources ; but a woman you know is con-

ained to the sphere of domestic life ; and in choosing one's masters, it is best I think to prefer honest people. You are going to see mine ; you will be charmed with the innocence of their life, the candor, the simplicity, I had almost said the politeness of their manners.

As she spoke thus, they arrive at the cottage. It was separated by a partition from the cot in which this incognita put up her sheep, counting them with the most serious attention, and without taking any further notice of the strangers who beheld her. An old man and his wife, such as the poets represent Philemon and Baucis, came out to meet their guests with that rural politeness that puts one in mind of the golden age.— We have nothing to offer you, says the good woman, but clean straw for a bed, milk, fruit, and rye bread to eat ; but to what heaven has given us you are heartily welcome. The travellers, as they entered the cottage, were surprised at that air of order and decency that every thing bespoke. The table was a single piece of walnut of the most exquisite polish ; you could see yourself in the enamel of the vessels where the milk was kept. Every thing bore the image of that smiling poverty where the simple wants of nature are agreeably satisfied. It is our dear child, said the old woman, who takes care of the house. In the morning before her flock

goes into the field, while it crops the dewy grafs round the house, she washes, scours, and puts every thing in order with an address that charms us.—What, says the Marchioness, is this shepherdess your daughter ? Ah, madam, would to heaven she were ! It is my heart that calls her so, for I have the love of a mother for her ; but I am not so happy as to have borne her ; we are not worthy of bringing such a child into the world.\* Who is she then ? whence comes she ? and what misfortune has brought her to this condition ? All this is a secret to us. It is now four years since she came in this dress to offer herself to keep our flock ; we would have taken her for nothing, her good looks, and the sweetness of her speech so gained the hearts of both of us. We suspected she was not what she appeared to be ; but our questions grieved her, and we thought proper to be silent. Our respect for her has only increased, the more we have known her ; but the more we would humble ourselves before her, the more humble she is to us. She cannot be said to obey us ; for we take care never to command her ; but it seems as if she guessed our meaning ; for she always prevents our wishes. It seems as if an angel had come down from heaven to comfort us in our old age.—And what is she doing now in the cot, says the Marchioness ?—she is giving fresh fodder to the flock ; she is milking the sheep and goats. It would

seem that the milk pressed by her hand becomes more delicate ; for when I go to sell it in the town, our customers are ready to eat me up, they find it so delicious. This dear child, as she tends her flock, employs herself in works of straw and ozier that every body admires. I wish you saw with what art she weaves the slender twigs. Every thing becomes precious in her hands. You see, madam, continues she, you see what an easy and quiet life we live here ; it is she that procures it for us. 'The only care of this heavenly creature is to make us happy.—Is she happy herself, says Mr. Fontrose?—She tries to make us believe so, says the old man ; but I have often made my wife observe, that, when she comes home from the pasture, her eyes are wet with tears, and her countenance most sorrowful. As soon as she sees us, she puts on a smile ; but we can easily see, she has some grief that consumes her ; yet we dare not ask her. Ah, madam, says the old woman, how my heart bleeds for this poor child, when she goes out, against my will, to feed the flocks in spite of the rain and snow ! How often have I fallen on my knees to beg she would let me take her place ; but all in vain. She goes out by sunrise, and comes home at night ready to perish with cold. Can you think, says she, I would let you expose yourself at your age to the rigor of the season ? scarce am I able to bear it myself. Then she will bring home,

under her arm, wood enough to warm us in the evening ; and when I complain of the fatigue she gives herself, never mind it, my good mother, its exercise that keeps me warm : labor belongs to my age. In a word, madam, she is as good as she is handsome ; and my husband and I never speak of her but with tears in our eyes.—Well, says the Marchioness, suppose one should take her away from you ?—We should lose, says the old woman, what is most dear to us in this world ; but if it was for her good, we should die content with that consolation. Yes, indeed, says the old woman, shedding tears, heaven grant her a fortune worthy of her, if it be possible ! I was in hopes her dear hand would close my eyes ; but I love her more than my life. Her coming in put an end to their discourse.

The shepherdess came in with a pail of milk in one hand, and in the other a basket of fruit ; and after gracefully saluting them, she went about her household affairs, as if nobody took any notice of her—my dear child, you give yourself a great deal of trouble, says the Marchioness. I endeavour, madam, to please our folks, who would wish to entertain you as well as they are able. And spreading a coarse but clean and white cloth on the table, you will make, says she, a homely and frugal meal ; but you must put up with coun-

try fare. Our bread is none of the whitest ; but it is sweet : the eggs are fresh, the milk is good, and the fruit I have just gathered such as the season affords. The diligence, the attention, the noble and becoming grace with which this wonderful shepherdess performed the duties of hospitality, the respect she shewed the old folks, whether she spoke to them or meant to read their wishes in their looks, every thing filled the strangers with admiration. Soon as they were lain down on the straw bed she had prepared for them ; our adventure, said they, has something of a prodigy in it. We must try to clear up this mystery : we must carry this child along with us.

About break of day, one of the people who had spent the night in repairing their carriage, came to tell them that it was ready. Madam de Fontrose, before her departure, called for the shepherdess. Without pretending, says she, to penetrate the secret of your birth or the cause of your misfortunes, every thing I see, every thing I hear interests me in you. I see that your courage raises you above your misfortune, and that you can conform your sentiments to your present condition : your accomplishments and your virtues make it respectable ; but it is unworthy of you. I am able, amiable stranger, to mend your fortune ; and my husband's sentiments are agreeable to mine. I hold a confi-

derable rank in Turin : I want a female companion ; and I shall think myself possessed of an inestimable treasure, if you will consent to go along with me. I would have you to banish from this proposition every idea of servitude : I don't think you was born for that ; but, should I be mistaken, I would rather raise you above your birth than leave you below it. I repeat it again ; its a friend I want to procure. And that you may not be uneasy about the fate of these good people ; I will do every thing to make them amends for the loss of you : they shall at least have a sufficiency to end their days in ease and plenty according to their rank ; and it is through your hands they shall receive what I intend for them. The old people, who were present at this discourse, kissed the hand of the Marchioness, and falling on their knees begged the young stranger to accept of these generous offers. They represented to her, with tears in their eyes, that they were on the brink of the grave ; that her only comfort was to make them happy in their old age ; and, at their death, as she would be left alone, their dwelling would become an insupportable solitude. The shepherdes, embracing them, mixed her tears with theirs : she thanked Mr. de Fontrose and his lady with a sensibility that gave a new lustre to her beauty. I cannot, says she, accept your favors. Heaven has mar-

ed out my place ; and may its will be done. But your generosity has engraven on my soul characters that never will be effaced. The respectable name of Fontrose will ever be near my heart. I have only one favor to ask of you : that you would be pleased to carry this adventure in eternal silence, and leave the world ignorant of the fate of one who wants to live and die in obscurity. The Marquis and his lady, moved with grief and compassion, redoubled their intreaties, but in vain : her resolution was unalterable ; and the old people, the travellers and the shepherdes parted in tears.

During the remaining part of their journey, our travellers were wholly taken up with this adventure. Their situation was like that of a person newly awak'd from a dream that leaves a lasting impression on their mind. Their imagination was yet full of this kind of romance when they arrived at Turin. We may easily believe that silence was not inviolably kept ; and that this became an inexhaustible subject of reflection and conjecture. Young Fontrose, who was present at these conversations, did not lose the minutest circumstance. He was of an age when the imagination is most lively, and the heart most susceptible of tender impressions : but he was one of those characters whose sensibility does not appear outwardly ; and whose passions at last break out with so much the

greater violence, as they are not weakened by any previous dissipation. Every thing Fontrose hears related of the beauties, the virtues and misfortunes of the shepherdes of Savoy, kindles in his breast the most ardent desire of seeing her. His imagination had drawn a picture of her which is ever present to his thoughts : he compares with her every thing he sees ; and every thing he sees comes short of her. But the more his impatience increases ; the greater care he takes to conceal it. The court of Turin with all its pleasures becomes odious to him. The valley that conceals from the world its fairest ornament attracts every power of his soul. It is there that happiness awaits him. But if his project is known, he sees insurmountable difficulties in his way : they will never consent to the journey he meditates : it will pass for a caprice of youth whose consequences will be apprehended : the shepherdess herself, startled at his pursuit, will not fail to fly from him : he loses her if he is known. In consequence of these reflections in which he spent three months, he resolves to leave every thing for her sake ; to go, in the disguise of a shepherd, to find her out in her solitude ; and to bring her from thence or die at her feet.

He disappears : no body knows what is become of him. His parents who expect his return, are at first uneasy ; and their fears in-

crease every day. Their disappointed hopes deprive them of all comfort ; and their fruitless searches plunge them in despair. A duel, an assassination, every accident the most dreadful presents itself to their thoughts ; and these unhappy parents mourn for the death of their son, the only hopes of their family.

At this very time when his family is in deep mourning, young Fontrose, in the habit of a shepherd, presents himself to the inhabitants of the village bordering on that valley which had been but too minutely described to him. His ambition is crowned with success. He is intrusted with the care of a flock.

During the first days, he allows his sheep to stray at random, his sole intention being to discover the places the fair shepherdess used to frequent. I must take care, says he, not to alarm the fears, or offend the delicacy of this fair hermit : if she is unhappy ; her heart must feel the want of consolation : if it is only a disrelish of the world and a taste for solitude and retirement that keeps her here ; she must pass some tedious moments, she must long for some company to amuse her : I must wait till she longs for mine. If I can but make my company agreeable to her, it will soon become necessary ; and then I shall act as the situation of her heart directs me. After all, we two are alone here in the world, and we must be designed for each other. From confidence to friendship there is but one step ; and from

friendship to love, the transition is still more easy at our age. And what age was Fontrose when he reasoned thus? Fontrose was just eighteen; but three months reflection on the subject makes one very knowing. While he indulges these thoughts, he hears at a distance that voice he had heard so much extolled. The emotion raised in his soul was as lively as if it had been unexpected.—“It is here, said the shepherdess in her plaintive song, it is here I enjoy the only comfort heaven has left me. My grief is delicious to my soul: I prefer its bitterness to all the deceitful sweets of pleasure.”—These accents wounded the tender heart of Fontrose. What can be the cause of that grief that consumes her? How sweet would it be to comfort her! scarce durst he indulge a more ambitious thought. He was afraid of alarming the fair shepherdess if he yielded imprudently to the impatience of seeing her; and for the first time, it was enough to have heard her. The next morning he came to the pastures; and after having observed the route she had taken, he went and placed himself at the foot of a rock which the day before had repeated to him the accents of that enchanting voice. I had forgot to tell you that Fontrose to the most elegant figure joined an accomplishment which the young nobility of Italy seldom neglect. He played on the hautboy, like Bezuzzi whose lessons he had attended, and who was then the

nightengale of Europe. Adelaide, more profoundly buried in her gloomy ideas, had not yet raised her voice, and every echo was silent. This silence was all of a sudden interrupted by the plaintive accents of Fontrose's hautboy. These unusual and unknown sounds excited in the soul of Adelaide a surprise mixed with pain. She had never heard on these mountains any other music than the shepherd's whistle.

Fixed in deep attention, her eyes alone wandered in search of the author of such melodious notes. She perceives, at a distance, a young shepherd sitting in the hollow of a rock, at the foot of which his flock was feeding : She draws near, to hear him more distinctly, How powerful, says she, is the instinct of nature ! The ear teaches this shepherd all the finess of art. Can mortal form more animated sounds ? what delicate inflexions ! what variety of shades ! who can persuade me, after this, that taste is not a gift of nature ?— Since Adelaide inhabited this desert, this was the first time her grief, suspended by an agreeable distraction, had opened her heart to the sweet emotions of pleasure. Fontrose, who had seen her approach and sit down at the foot of a willow to listen to him, pretended to take no notice of her. He seized the moment of her retreat, and measured the walk of his flock so as to meet her on the brow of the hill where their paths crossed

each other. He gave her, as he passed, a transient look, and then went on his way as if he minded nothing but his sheep. But O, what beauties did that look discover! he saw the modest virtues in her eye: he saw her lips breathing immortal sweets: he saw and felt the sweet attraction. But if their power was such in this their languid state, what must he not have felt, had they been animated by love? It was easy to see that grief had faded, in its bloom, the rose that sat upon her lovely cheek. But what touched him most sensibly was the elegance of her shape and gait. She moved with such graceful ease as a young cedar when it yields to the soft and gentle breath of the zephyrus. This image, that love had graven on his memory in flaming characters, drank up his spirits. How poorly, says he, have they described to me this beauty unknown to the world, whose adoration she deserves! yet she lives in a wilderness: she dwells in a cottage:—She, who ought to have princes to wait upon her, is taken up with the care of a few sheep. In what a dress did I see her! but she adorns every thing, and nothing can disguise her. But what a life is this for a creature so delicate! to feed upon husks in a savage climate, to lie upon straw:—good heavens! for whom are the delicacies of life? Yes: I will raise her from this wretched con-

dition too unworthy of her. Sleep interrupted his reflections ; but did not efface her image. Adelaide on her part, sensibly struck with the youth and beauty of Fontrose, could not help admiring the caprice of fortune. In what obscurity, says she, has nature assembled so many talents and so many graces ! but alas, these gifts, only useless to him, might have been his misfortune in a more exalted station. What evils has not beauty caused in the world ? wretched creature ! Is it I who ought to set any value on it ?—This bitter reflection poisoned in her soul the pleasure she had tasted : she upbraided herself for having any relish for it, resolving in future to deny herself that gratification.—The next day Fontrose thought he could perceive she was shy of him ; for what can escape the penetrating eye of love : he fell into a mortal grief.—Is it possible she can suspect my disguise ? have I betrayed myself ? this tormented him all the day long, and his hautboy lay neglected. Adelaide was not so far off but she could have heard him ; and his silence surprised her. At last she began to sing.—“ All nature seems to participate my grief ; the birds chirp only melancholy notes : the echo answers to my sad complaints : the zephyrus groan amidst the falling leaves : the brooks in murmuring imitate my sighs, and seem to flow in tears.” Fontrose, melting into tenderness, could not

help bearing a part. Never was concert more moving than that of his hautboy with the sweet voice of Adelaide.—O heavens, says she, is it an enchantment? I dare not believe my senses; I dare not trust my ears; it is no shepherd, surely, it is an angel I hear. The natural sense of harmony never could inspire such heavenly sounds. As she spoke these words, a rural, or rather a celestial symphony made the valley ring. Adelaide now thought she saw before her eyes the reality of those prodigies that poetry ascribes to music her brilliant sister. In this flutter of her spirits, she knew not whether she should yield to this enchantment, or fly from it.—But she perceived the shepherd gathering his flocks to return home. How little, says she, does he know the powerful charm he spreads around him! his simple heart is a stranger to vanity; he does not even wait for the praises I owe him. Such is the power of music; it is the only talent that gives self-enjoyment: all others beg the poor applause of the multitude. This gift was given to man in innocence: it is the purest of all our pleasures. Alas, it is the only one I can now relish; and I look on this shepherd as a new echo who is come to answer my complaints.

For some days after, Fontrose affected to shun her in his turn: Adelaide was grieved. Heaven, says she, seemed in pity, to have sent me this small consolation: but I have

made an idol of it, and am justly punished by its loss. One day they met by chance on the brow of the hill: shepherd, says she, do you lead your flocks to a great distance?—These first words of Adelaide threw Fontrose into such an extasy as almost deprived him of speech. I don't know, says he, hesitating; it is not I who leads my flock, it is my flock that leads me: my sheep are better acquainted with these parts than I—I leave them to chuse the best pastures.—From whence came you then, says the shepherdess? I was born beyond the Alps.—Was you born a shepherd?—Seeing I am a shepherd, I must have been born to be one. That is what I much doubt, says Adelaide, observing him with attention. Your talents, your language, your looks, every thing seems to tell me that fortune has placed you in a higher sphere. You are pleased to say so, says Fontrose; but ought you to think that nature gives no accomplishments to shepherds? was you born to be a queen? Adelaide blushed at this answer, and giving a new turn to the discourse: the other day, says she, with your hautboy you accompanied my voice with an art that would be a prodigy in a simple shepherd.—Your voice, says Fontrose, is a prodigy in a shepherdess.—But did nobody instruct you? I have, like you, no other guides but my heart and my ear. You sung; my heart was moved with compassion; what my heart

feels, my hautboy expresses ; I breathe my soul into it ; this is all my secret, and there is nothing more easy.—This is incredible, says Adelaide.—I said so too when I heard you sing ; but what shall we say ? nature and love sometimes take a pleasure to bestow their gifts on the humblest fortune, to let the world see that there is no condition so low but they are able to ennoble. During this conversation they had insensibly advanced into the valley ; when Fontrose, animated by a ray of hope, began to rend the air with those sprightly and brilliant sounds that pleasure inspires.—Ah, for heaven's sake, says Adelaide, spare my poor heart the painful image of a sentiment it cannot relish. This solitude is sacred to grief ; its echos are not accustomed to repeat the accents of profane joy : every thing here mourns with me.—Then I can join in concert with your echos : for I have an endless subject of complaint. These words, pronounced with a sigh, were followed by a long silence.—You have reason to complain ! says Adelaide, is it of men ? is it of fortune ?—I know not ; but I am unhappy : ask me no more.—Hear me, says Adelaide : heaven seems to offer you and me a consolation in our misfortunes : mine are like a grievous burden too heavy for me to bear. Whoever you are, if you are acquainted with grief, you must be compassionate ; and I be-

Beve you worthy of my confidence ; but you must promise me that it will be mutual. Alas, says Fontrose, my misfortunes are such that I shall perhaps be condemned never to reveal them. This mystery only increased the curiosity of Adelaide. Meet me to-morrow, says she, at the foot of this hill, under that ancient spreading oak where you heard me groan. There I will tell you things that will move your pity. Fontrose passed the night in cruel agitation. His fate depended on what he was going to hear. A thousand frightful and distracting thoughts one after another, came to torment him. He dreaded above all things to be let into the mortifying secret of some unhappy amour. If she is in love, says he, I am undone.

He came to the place appointed. Adelaide arrived in a few moments after. The sky was overspread with clouds ; and nature in mourning seemed to presage the sadness of their meeting. Soon as they were seated at the foot of the oak, Adelaide thus began :  
 “ You see these stones that the grass begins to cover ; it is the tomb of the kindest and best of men, who fell a sacrifice to my imprudence and too fond love. I am a French woman by birth, of a family of some distinction, and too great affluence to my sorrow. The Count of Orestan conceived for me the tenderest affection : I favored his passion ; alas, I favored it but too much. My

parents opposed our mutual inclination ; and my foolish passion made me consent to a marriage sacred to virtuous souls, but disallowed by the laws. Italy was at that time the theatre of war. My husband was going there to join a corps which he was to command. I followed him as far as Briançon : my womanish fondness detained him there two days longer than he intended. The young man, who had high sentiments of honor, did not prolong his stay but with the greatest reluctance. He sacrificed his duty to my pleasure : but what had I not sacrificed to him ? I insisted on it ; and he could not resist my tears. He left me with foreboding fears that alarmed me. I attended him as far as this valley where I took leave of him ; and, till I should hear from him, I returned to Briançon. A few days after there was a rumor of a battle. I doubted whether Orestan had been there : I wished it for his honor, I dreaded it for my love ; when I received from him a letter which I thought full of comfort : "*Such a day,*" says he, "*at such an hour, you will find me in that valley and under that oak where we parted : I shall come there alone ; and I intreat you to bring nobody with you : I should not be alive at this moment if it was not for the pleasure of seeing you.* Such was my stupidity ; such was my infatuation ! I could see nothing in this letter but his impatience of seeing

me : and that impatience was too flattering to displease me. I came to this very oak where we are now sitting : Orestan came, and after the kindest reception, it was your pleasure, my dear Adelaide, says he : I have failed in my duty in the most important hour of my life. What I feared is come upon me. The battle was fought : my regiment was engaged : it has gained immortal honor ; and I was not there. My honor is lost beyond resource. I blame you not for my misfortune. I have but one sacrifice more to make you ; and my heart is now come to offer it up. At this discourse, pale and trembling, and hardly breathing, I received my husband in my arms. I felt my blood run cold in my veins, my knees bent under me, and I fell down senseless. He took it seems that opportunity to tear himself from my bosom : the first thing that awoke me was the noise of that stroke that put an end to his life. I shall not tell you the situation in which I then found myself : it is beyond the power of language to express : the tears that now flow, the sobs that stop my breath, are but a faint resemblance of it. After passing a long night over that bloody corpse, in all the stupidity of grief, my first care was to bury him, and with him to bury my shame. These hands of mine dug his grave. I wish not to grieve you : but the moment the earth was going to separate me from the sad remains of

my husband was more dreadful to me than ever that can be which separates my soul from my body. Being spent with grief and wanting nourishment, my poor hands were employed for two days in digging this grave with inconceivable fatigue. When my strength failed me, I rested myself on the cold and levid bosom of my husband. I buried him at last ; and my resolution was to wait on this very spot till death should join us again. But cruel hunger soon began to gnaw my parched bowels. I thought it a crime to refuse to nature the support of a life more painful than death. I changed my dress for that of a shepherds, and embraced that state as my only refuge. Since that time all my comfort is to come and weep over this grave which I intend shall be mine. You see, continues she, with what sincerity I open my heart to you. Now I can weep before you at full liberty : it is a consolation I much wanted ; but I expect the same confidence from you. Think not to deceive me. I see plainly that a shepherds life is as strange and more new to you than to me. You are young, perhaps tender hearted : and if I can believe my conjectures, our misfortunes proceed from the same source ; you like me, have been in love. We will have the greater sympathy with each other. I look upon you as a friend that heaven, touched with my misfortunes, has been pleased to send

me in my solitude. You may look upon me as a friend capable of giving you, if not good advice, at least a laudable example."

You wound me says Fontrose, in the tenderest part : and whatever sensibility you may suppose nature has bestowed on me ; you never can imagine the impression your story has made on my heart. Alas, how happy should I be, could I return your favours in kind, with that confidence you repose in me, and of which you are so deserving ! but I have told you already, I had foreseen it : such is the nature of my misfortunes, that an eternal silence must forever bury them in the bottom of my heart. You are very unhappy continues he with a profound sigh ; I am much more so : this is all I can tell you. Let not my silence offend you : it is terrible to me to be condemned to it. As a faithful companion of your steps, I will soften your labours : I will share in all your griefs : I will see you weep on this tomb ; I will mix my tears with yours. You shall never repent having deposited your cares in a heart, alas, but too sensible of them. I do repent of it this moment, says she with some vivacity : and both with down cast looks retired in silence. Adelaide as she parted with Fontrose thought she saw in his face the picture of profound grief. Alas I have awaked in his soul the sensibility of his pains : what

must the horror of them be, since he thinks himself more wretched than me !

From this day there was no more song, no more rational discourse between Fontrose and Adelaide. They neither sought nor shun'd each other. looks full of consternation was almost their only language. If he found her weeping over the grave of her husband ; with a heart distracted between pity jealousy and grief, he would contemplate her in silence, and answer her sighs with heavy groans.

Two long and tedious months had worn out in this painful situation ; and Adelaide saw the youth of Fontrose withering like a flower cut down by the hand of the reaper. The grief that consumed him afflicted her the more sensibly as she was ignorant of its cause. She was far from suspecting herself to be the object of it. However as it is natural for two sentiments, which divide the soul to weaken each other ; the grief of Adelaide for the death of Orestes grew every day less acute in proportion as she yielded to that pity Fontrose inspired her with. As she was sure that pity could have nothing criminal in it ; it never entered into her thoughts to resist it : and the object of that generous sentiment being ever in her sight renewed it every moment. The languor, into which this young man had fallen, was such that Adelaide did not think it her duty to leave him any longer to h

You are a dying, said she, and you add to my grief that of seeing you pine away before my eyes without being able to give you any relief. If the history of my youthful follies has not made you dispise me : if the most sincere and tender friendship can merit your esteem : in a word, if you would not make me more unhappy than I was before I saw you ; tell me the cause of your grief. You have none but me in the world to help you to bear it. Was your secret more important than mine ; you need not fear a discovery. The death of my husband has placed a gulf between the world and me ; and the secret I require of you will soon be buried in that grave where grief is slowly conducting me. —I expect to go there before you, says Fontrose, melting into tears. Allow me to end my wretched life without leaving you the reproach of shortening it. O heavens ! what do I hear ? cries she in wild astonishment. Who ? I ! Is it possible that I can have had any hand in your misfortunes ? You pierce me to the heart. But go on. What have I done ? what have I said ? alas, I tremble. O ye immortal powers ! have I been sent into the world to make my fellow creatures miserable ? Speak ! I conjure you speak ! It is now too late to conceal yourself ; you have gone too far to dissemble any longer.—Well, I am . . . I am Fontrose, the son of those travellers who admire and respect you so much.

Every thing they told me of your beauty, your virtue, your accomplishments, inspired me with the fatal design of coming to see you in this disguise. I have left my family in despair, thinking me lost and mourning my death. I have seen you ; I know what keeps you in this place ; I know my only hope is to die adoring you. O ! Adelaide, upbraid me not ; it were cruel : give me no advice ; it would be in vain. My resolution is as firm and unalterable as yours. If, in divulging my secret, you trouble my last moments ; you will only draw on yourself the guilt of wronging a person incapable of wronging you.

Adelaide, though greatly troubled at this unexpected news, yet tried to comfort him. It is a duty, says she, I owe his parents, to save the life of this young man ; to restore to their arms the hopes of their family : Heaven seems to have given me this opportunity of acknowledging their unmerited favors. Thus, far from discouraging him by an unreasonable severity, she tried every means that the tenderest pity and most cordial friendship could suggest to sooth his grief.

O angelic creature, sent from heaven on messages of love. I feel, says Fontrose, the reluctance you have to make me unhappy : your heart belongs to him who sleeps in this tomb ; I see that not death itself can sepa-

rate you : I see how ingenious your virtue is to conceal from me the sight of my misfortune : I feel it in all its weight, and it crushes me to death ; but I forgive you. Your duty is never to love me ; mine is ever to adore you.

Impatient to execute the design she had formed, Adelaide comes to the cottage. Father, says she, to the old shepherd, do you feel yourself strong enough to undertake a journey to Turin ? I want a faithful person to give Mr. Fontrose and his lady an important advice. The shepherd answered, that his ambition to serve them would give him courage. Go, says Adelaide, you will find them mourning the death of their only son : tell them from me, that he is alive, that he is in this place, and that it is I who want to restore him to their arms ; but that it is indispensably necessary they come themselves to receive him.

The shepherd sets out : he arrives at Turin : he gives in his name as the old man of the valley of Savoy.—Ah, says madam de Fontrose, perhaps some misfortune has happened to our shepherds. Let him come in says the Marquis : he is come perhaps to tell us that she consents to live with us.—Since the death of my son, says the Marchioness, there is nothing in this world would give me so much pleasure. The shepherd is introdu-

ced. You are mourning, says he for your son : I am come to tell you that he is alive : its our dear child that found him in the valley : she has sent me to tell you ; but you yourselves, she says, must come and fetch him.

As he spoke thus, surprise and joy had taken from Madam de Fontrose the use of her senses. The Marquis, in wild disorder, calls assistance to his wife, brings her to herself, embraces the old man, and tells all the family that their son is found. The Marchioness recovering her spirits, what shall we do, says she, seizing the hands of the old shepherd and tenderly squeezing them ; what shall we do to repay a favor that restores us to life ?

Every thing was got in readiness for their departure. They set out on their journey with the old shepherd, and travelling night and day, soon arrived in the valley where their only treasure was. The shepherdess was in the pastures. The old woman conducted them there : but what was their surprise when they saw their beloved son sitting beside her on the grass in the dress of a shepherd ? Ah, cruel child, says his mother, throwing herself in his arms, what sorrow have you given us ! how could you run away from our love ? What brought you here ? I came here, says he, to adore what you yourself admired.—Pardon me, madam, says Adelaide, for leaving you so long in gri-

had I known him sooner, you should sooner have been comforted. After the first emotions of nature, Fontrose had relapsed into his former melancholy. Come, says the Marquis, let us go and rest ourselves in the cottage, and forget the trouble that this young fool has given us.—Yes, sir, I have played the fool, says Fontrose to his father, who led him by the hand. Nothing less than madness could have suspended in my heart the sentiments of nature: nothing but madness could have made me forget the most sacred duties, and torn me from all that was dear to me in the world; but you yourselves were the cause of this folly, and I have paid dearly for it. I love, without hopes of obtaining her, the most accomplished creature upon earth: you see nothing, you know nothing of this incomparable woman: she is honor, sensibility, and virtue in human shape. I love her to idolatry: I cannot be happy without her: and yet I know she can never be mine.—Has she intrusted you, says the Marquis, with the secret of her birth?—I know enough to assure my father that it is not inferior to my own: she has renounced a considerable fortune to bury herself in this desert. And do you know what induces her to it?—Yes, Father, but that is a secret she herself must reveal.—She is married perhaps?—No, she is a widow, but she is not the more at liberty; her bonds are only so much the strong-

er. Daughter, says the Marquis as he entered the cottage, you see you make every one crazy that bears the name of Fontrose. The extravagant passion of this young man could not be excused but by an object so extraordinary as yourself. My wife's greatest ambition was to have you for a friend and companion : this child cannot live unless he gets you for a wife : I desire no less to have you for a daughter ; see then how many unhappy people you must make by a refusal.— Ah, sir, I am ashamed of your goodness ; only hear me and you shall be my judge. Then in presence of the old shepherd and his wife, Adelaide gave them a full and faithful relation of her deplorable adventure. She added too the name of her family which was not unknown to Fontrose ; and concluded by taking himself to witness of the inviolable fidelity she owed to such a husband. On hearing this mournful story, consternation was painted in every face. Young Fontrose, quite overcome, had retired to a corner of the cottage to give vent to his grief. His tender hearted father run to the assistance of his child : see, says he, my dear Adelaide, what a condition he is in. Madam de Fontrose, who sat beside Adelaide, pressed her in her arms while she bathed her in tears. Well, my daughter, says she, must we mourn the death of our child a second time ? the old

man and his wife weeping and looking steadfastly at Adelaide waited for her to speak.— Heaven is my witness, says Adelaide, that I would give my life to acknowledge such unmeritted goodness. It would increase the weight of all my misfortunes, could I reproach myself with being the author of yours; but I will make Fontrose himself my judge; allow me only to speak to him for a moment. Then retiring alone with him: hear me, says she, Fontrose, you know what sacred ties keep me in this place. Could I cease to love, could I cease to mourn a husband that has loved me but too much; I should be the most despicable of women! Friendship, gratitude and esteem are sentiments I owe you; but none of these can supply the place of love: the more you have conceived for me, the more you have a right to expect from me; it is the impossibility of performing this duty that hinders me from undertaking it. But I see you in a situation that would soften the hardest heart: it is dreadful to me to be the cause of it; and it would be still more dreadful to hear your parents accuse me of it. I am willing then to forget myself at this moment, and to make you, as far as lies in my power, the disposer of our fortune. You are then to chuse which of the two situations you think most eligible. either to renounce me, overcome your passion and forget me; or to possess a woman who, having her heart

full of another object, can only give you sentiments too weak to satisfy the desires of a lover.—It is enough, cries Fontrose : the friendship of a soul like yours may well supply the place of love. I shall no doubt be jealous of the tears you give to the memory of another husband ; but the cause of that jealousy as it makes you more respectable, will make you more amiable in my eyes.

She is mine ! says he, throwing himself in the arms of his parents ; and I may thank your generosity for it : her respect for you has procured me this happiness ; and you are doubly the authors of my life. From this moment Adelaide could not disengage herself from their embraces..

But was it only to pity and gratitude she yielded ? I am willing to believe it that I may admire her the more : and it appears that Adelaide thought so herself. Whatever may be in that, she would not depart without revisiting the tomb, which she could not leave without regret. O my dear Orestes, says she, if from the mansions of the dead thou canst read the secret thoughts of my soul, thy shade cannot murmur at the sacrifice I make : I owe it to the generous sentiments of this virtuous family ; but my heart will ever remain with thee.

She could not be torn from the place without a kind of violence. At her desire, a monument was erected to the memory of her

husband ; and the cottage of the shepherds, who followed her to Turin, was changed into a country seat, as simple as solitary ; where she proposed to come sometimes to mourn the follies and misfortunes of her youth.

THE  
*PARROT in the NUNNERY:*

A M O C K

HEROIC POEM;

I N F O U R C A N T O S ;

O R T H E

Adventures of VER-VERT.

*A prose translation, from the French of*

G R E S S E T.

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## *The Parrot in the Nunnery.*

C A N T O 1st.

*Addressed to the Lady Abbess D—*

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**Y**OU, with whom the solitary graces shine without affectation, and reign without pride ; you, Madam, whose soul espoused to truth has found the happy art of reconciling the love of virtue to that of taste, and softening its austerity with the amiable smile of liberty ; since you are pleased that I should relate the mournful story of a *noble Bird* ; be you my Muse and animate my song. Inspire me then with those affecting sounds, those moving accents that warbled on your lyre when dear Sultana in the prime of youth was torn from your arms, and hurried, at an early hour, down to the gloomy regions of the dead. The unprecedented woes of my young hero perhaps may draw from you a sympathetic tear.

Were I to draw his portrait at full length struggling against a tempest of misfortunes, his travels over more than half this vast terraqueous globe, his perils on the ocean, and all the devious wanderings of this life ; it

were a task worthy of the Meonian bard. I might call up the Gods and Devils of antiquity to celebrate the adventures of a hero as pious as *Eneas*, as brilliant and more *unfortunate* than he. But the Muses are volatile ladies : it is no easy matter to fix their attention long upon one object : they love to flutter like the bee, roving from flower to flower, extracting only the *quintessence* of a subject. It was from you I imbibed these maxims ; and I should think myself happy, could my writings retain the smallest tincture of them.

If I at any time have been too rash in drawing aside the veil, if I have given occasion to the profane world audaciously to peep into the grate, or cast a licentious eye on the sacred mysteries of the parlor ; I am confident your good humor will overlook it with a smile : you can freely laugh at foibles from which you are yourself happily exempt : you are fully sensible that an amiable sincerity is more pleasing in the sight of heaven than all the arts of disguise. Were virtue to come into our world in human shape, I am apt to think that, instead of borrowing the arts of grimace to set off her beauties, it is rather in your easy unaffected air, or that of the Graces she would chuse to make her appearance.

It has been observed by many grave authors, that people seldom improve their morals by much travelling : a wandering life

for the most part, an erroneous one. It is much safer to stay peaceably at home under the paternal roof, and preserve our native virtue in the chimney corner than to ramble over the world in search of adventures: besides there is a great chance of our bringing home a large importation of foreign vices.

The premature and disastrous fate of our hero will be an eternal monument of this truth; and echo, with a loud voice, from all the parlors of Nevers will say amen.

At Nevers, then, in the Nunnery of the VISITANDINS, there lived some years ago a famous PARROT: his virtues, his talents and amiable accomplishments were such as might have promised a happier fate; if generous spirits were always fortunate in this world, VER-VERT, (for that was our hero's name) being transported from beyond the Ganges at an age when his tender mind was what philosophers call *Tabula rasa* or sheet of clean paper; was immured in that seminary for the benefit of his education. He was handsome, brisk and volatile, and most exquisitely shaped; amiable, affable, and open-hearted, as one is commonly at that age: he was naturally of an amorous disposition, but innocent: in a word, he was a bird worthy of such a holy cage; and for his loquacity and volubility of tongue, peculiarly fit for a nunnery.

It would be unnecessary, I think, to describe the care the sisters took of him ; it is enough to say they were nuns. Every mother of the choir loved him above all things *next to her confessor* ; and in many hearts, if there is any truth in history, the bird often cut out the father. In this peaceful retreat, he shared in all the fine syrups with which the dear father, in God, thanks to the sweet nuns, refreshed his sacred bowels. VER-  
 VERT, as being the *only venial* object of their love, was the life and soul of the convent : If you except some old vaporish females, jealous superintendants of the younger sisters, he was dear to the whole community. Being not as yet arrived at the years of discretion, he was at liberty to say and do what he would ; and whatever he did or said was sure to please. Amusing the sisters at their work, he would slyly peck their veils and gimps : in a word, there could be no party of pleasure unless he was there to whistle, tumble, and play the butterfly and nightengale. He would play with the sisters, but with that modesty and decorum that a novice always observes in her fun. Being incessantly interrogated by many female voices all at once, he would return a separate and distinct answer to each of them without the least hesitation ; as Cesar is said to have dictated, at the same time, to four secretaries on different subjects.

This favorite adonis, having free access to all places, was admitted to eat in the refectory ;\* and you may be sure there was nothing at that elegant table too good for him : besides all this, the sisters seldom failed to have their pockets loaded with confections, and the most exquisite sweet-meats to employ his indefatigable appetite between meals.— The art of pleasing is said to have originated among the sisters of the visitation, and so may be thought hereditary to the order.— VER-VERT felt it every day to his happy experience : every one was anxious to please the fair pensioner, who past his days and nights in ease and pleasure, in all the pomp and splendor of an eastern monarch, more caressed and adored than the grand seignior in the midst of his fair seraglio. The place of his retreat at night was commonly in the grand dortor,§ where he was at liberty to chuse his own partner : happy, thrice happy the mother whom he deigned to honor with his company ! It was indeed but seldom that the ancient Duennas obtained that favor ; the simple alcove of the spruce young novices seemed more to his taste ; for you must think he was extremely delicate. Soon as the young Anchoret had made his choice, he would rest himself on the *agnus-box*|| till

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\* Dining room in a convent or nunnery.

§ The room where the nuns all sleep.

|| A box stamped with the figure of a lamb holding a

awaked by the crimson blushes of Aurora. It was then our gallant enjoyed the much envied and delicious pleasure of seeing and hearing every thing that passed at the levee of the young nuns, with all the apparatus of the toilet. I said toilet, but meant to say it in a whisper ; though I have often heard that beauty under a veil has no less need of faithful mirrors than when adorned with ribbons and lace. As there is a mode for the world and for the court ; so there is also a mode for the veil : for oftentimes the Ciprian goddess, in her frolicks, takes a trip down to these sequestered mansions with all the youthful train of loves and graces that wait upon her steps : she can pass unseen through bars and grates, and walls impervious : and she, unseen by all save by the eye of love, knows how to give a gallant air to the gimp and to the veil, and to adjust the dress, in every part, in such a taste as adds new graces to the simplest stuff. But this *en passant* : let us return to our hero. In this more than Mahometan paradise of voluptuous indolence did VER-VERT pass his days, without labor and without care ; and alas, as but too often happens to unthinking mortals, without a single thought of futurity. He reigned in every heart without a rival. Sister Theele was so fond of him that she forgot her beloved sparrows : four Canary birds died of grief, and

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cross—that wherein the nuns hold their crucifix,

two cats, formerly in favor, fell into a deep consumption.

Who would have thought it ? in these happy days, that all the pains and care bestowed on the education of this youth was so much labor lost ; that the fatal time would come, *O tempora, O mores !* when this VER-VERT, now the idol of every heart, would become an object of horror ? But stop, my muse, nor dare to anticipate the tears that must flow at the sight of his misfortunes, too bitter fruit that sprung from the tender care of our sisters.

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## C A N T O 2d.

IT may be easily imagined that a young student at such a college would not be deficient in point of elocution. The eloquent bird, excepting at table, in imitation of the nuns, never held his tongue. It is true he spoke like a printed book ; always with an air that shewed his good breeding. He was none of your foppish birds whose trifling frothy and insignificant talk is eternally betraying the mean company they have kept.—VER-VERT was a devout parrot, a pure soul who had imbibed good principles : he had never entertained the idea of vice, nor ever spoke an immodest word : but as for psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, he knew them

without number. No priest could say his *Pater noster*, his *Benedicite* or *Ave Maria* with more solemnity ; and when alone, which was very seldom, he would entertain himself in a kind of religious soliloquy. It is true that, in the course of his studies, he had enjoyed some singular advantages ; there being in that seminary many females of profound erudition who had all the carols ancient and modern by heart. Instructed and formed by their frequent lessons, the young pupil soon became equal, if not superior to his tutors ; and being by nature what Aristotle calls a "*mimic animal*," he had adopted the pious lingo of their tone, and would imitate most adroitly the holy sighs, the tender, languishing, dying notes of these cooing doves. In a word VER-VERT knew all that a mother of the choir is supposed to know.

Merit so distinguished, you may be sure, could not long be confined within the narrow limits of a cloister. Through every street in Nevers, the conversation of all polite companies turned upon the surprising genius and accomplishments of the parrot of the blessed nuns ; and many people of distinction of both sexes came from distant parts to see this extraordinary personage. But VER-VERT, conscious of his dignity, never stirred from the parlor. Sister Melania, in a fine gimp, had the honor of carrying the bird and introdu-

cing the strangers who attended his levee. At first she made the spectators observe the brilliancy of his colours, the elegance of his shape, and the juvenile sweetness of his person : and indeed his figure was so engaging that it seldom failed to gain a happy prepossession in his favors. But the beauty of this young convert was the least of his merit :—the agreeable and pleasant sensation it produced was instantaneously changed into rapture soon as his enchanting voice struck the ears of his auditors. Gravely composing his countenance in self-recollection, and gradually assuming the holy gestures the young professors had taught him, he would begin his discourse ; while at every moment, some new, some delicate and unexpected beauty gave all the charms of variety to his expression. But what is most surprising, and almost incredible in a public speaker, there was none of his auditory ever *fell asleep* : where is the *orator*, where is the *preacher* that can say as much ? Every one listened with attention, every one extolled his memory ; while he, well accustomed to such incense, and fully sensible of the emptiness of *popular applause*, would bridle up with a sigh, always triumphing with moderation. When he had concluded his discourse, which he always did with a grave but musical cadence of voice ; wiping his bill, he would fall back with a sanctified air, leaving his flock to their

meditations. As to his morals, we have already observed that he had never used any indecent language; and this is true, if we may be allowed to except some words of *scandal*, and such female talk as he might have learnt at the grate, or accidentally overheard among the sisters during the hours of privacy in the dortoir.

Such was the life that father VER-VERE lived in this delicious nest, like a prince, a saint and a philosopher; dear to many a young virgin. He was as fat as a monk, and no less venerable; fair as Adonis, and as learned as an Abbot: he was always beloved as he was always amiable, elegant and polite: Happy, thrice happy, had he never travelled.

But, alas, who can hinder the decrees of fate? It was our hero's destiny to travel.—That dark, that gloomy time inevitably must come; that dismal hour that will eclipse his glory. O crime! O shame! O fatal voyage! painful to remember and dreadful to relate! why can't I bury it in eternal silence and veil it from the eyes of posterity? A great name is a dangerous acquisition, and the pinnacle of honor a very critical station. Happier is the mortal who passes his days in the humble obscurity of private life. The most brilliant genius, crowned with unexpected success, is like a lofty vessel spreading all her sails before a flattering gale which often sounds a prelude to a dreadful shipwreck.

Thy name VER-VERT, thy brilliant exploits were not confined to these climates. Fame, with her loud trumpet, sounded thy praises, and bore thy glory on her wings as far as Nants. There, as it is well known the sisters of the visitation have their flock of reverend mothers who, like others in our nation, are not among the latest in receiving such important intelligence: being then among the first to hear the news of this strange phenomenon, they were seized with a longing desire to be at the bottom of it: A woman's longing, you know, is like a subtil flame that inwardly preys upon the vitals; that of a nun, as being more confined, is ten times worse. The hearts of the sisters are already at Nevers: and more than twenty wise heads have already lost their senses for a bird. The case admits of no delay. A letter is immediately written to the mother superior of that monastery, to beg, for the sake of all the saints in heaven, she would send the lovely bird to Nants by the way of the Loire; that he might in person enjoy his fame, and give himself up, if it were but for a few weeks, to their ardent wishes.

The letter is dispatched. When may they expect an answer! perhaps in twelve days: alas what an age till then! letter is sent upon letter with repeated intreaties: sleep is banished from the convent: sister Cecilia can't live much longer.

Well, the epistle at last arrives at Nevers. The subject being momentous, the *Grand Chapter* is assembled. The sisterhood, you may be sure, were startled at this demand. Part with VER-VERT ? O heavens ! who would not rather lose her life ? in these living tombs, within these solitary walls, what should we do if this dear bird was gone ? thus spoke the younger sisters of the veil whose youthful blood, impatient of inaction, was more susceptible of the sweet emotions of innocent pleasure : and to speak the truth, it seemed but reasonable that this young convey, so closely confined and having no other bird to amuse them, might at least be indulged with one poor parrot. However the assistant mothers, the ancient and venerable presidents of this senate, whose hearts were more callous, were of a different mind : after deliberately weighing the merits of the case, and being therewith well and ripely advised, they were unanimously of opinion, that the young pupil should be sent to Nants for a fortnight ; because they were afraid that an obstinate refusal might create a misunderstanding between them and our dear sisters of Nants. Such was the resolution of this female senate.

As soon as this decision of the ladies in the *upper house* was made public, there arose great disorder in the community. What a sacrifice ! who can submit to it ? is it possi-

ble, says sister Seraphine ; can we live and part with VER-VERT ? three times mother Sacrist turns pale ; three times she sighs ; she weeps, she fumes, she faints, grows speechless. Nothing is to be heard but weeping and bitter lamentation. It is hard to say what presage of fatality might have drawn this voyage to their imagination in gloomy colours ; but it is said that the frightful dreams, that haunted them at night, redoubled the horrors of the day. But vain are all the terrors of the night, which the malignant powers of darkness often send to frighten puny mortals. The sorrow of our sisters was no less vain : for now the fatal hour approaches when they, though much reluctant, must bid adieu to this dear youth, and begin a long and tedious absence, that purgatory of an amorous soul. Now every sister mourns like a young turtle who has lost her mate by the rash hand of some unlucky school-boy : now she sits forlorn ; and feels already in her heart all the bitter pangs of dreary widowhood. What sweet kisses did Ver-Vert receive at parting ! what tender, what tumultuous passions now arise ! they tear him from each others arms and bathe him in their tears. Every moment now discovers in the dear creature some new beauties they had never observed before. But now the hero is gone : and love with him has taken leave of the nunnery. “ Go,

my son ; go where honor calls thee, and may the friendly zephyrus waft thee o'er the seas, and bring thee back again faithful as now, and ever amiable ; while I must here remain a solitary widow, condemned to languish out my days in sad exile, banished from thee, from love and all its joys : go, my VER-VERT, and may you ever find in all your travels the same reception you have found with us." Such was the farewell of a young nun, who, to dissipate her melancholy, had often devoutly said her mattins in *Shakespear* or *Racine* ; and would not have been sorry to leave the convent and follow the speaking bird through the world. But César has passed the Rubicon : the hero is now embarked, virtuous as yet, and modest ; may heaven preserve him so, and send him safely back to the blessed nuns.

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### C A N T O 3d.

THE same elegant vessel, that bore the holy bird on the waves ; carried also two nymphs and three dragoons ; a nurse, a monk, and two gascoons. And it must be owned that a young person stepping out of a *nunnery* could hardly fall into a company more *happily* selected. VER-VERT in reality thought himself transported into a new world.

he heard a strange language, and was entertained with scenes of action and manners totally new. The bird, greatly amazed, knew not what to make of their stile : it was indeed far from being evangelical ; it was very different from that scripture phraseology, those pious ejaculations he had been accustomed to among the sweet vestals. For the dragoons, a race very little tinctured with devotion, expressed themselves for the most part in the genuine dialect of Billingsgate : resolute to beguile the tediousness of the voyage, they seemed to have made choice of Bacchus for their tutelary saint ; while the gascons and the female pilgrims confabulated in the lower stile of gallantry. The mariners, who bore a capital part in this concert, did not fail to thunder out many new coined oaths and imprecations, which their strong and masculine voices attuned to the boisterous element they inhabit, articulated distinctly VER-VERT's ears without losing a syllable. During this confusion of languages, our hero himself, though much against his nature, remained in mournful silence : confounded and ashamed, he listened attentively, without daring to join in the conversation ; for he knew not what to think, nor what to say.

This obstinate silence of our young adventurer could not long escape the observation of his fellow-passengers ; though it was interpreted little to his advantage : for they

unanimously pronounced him a very proud or a very insipid companion. Father Lubin, with an air not very monastic, undertook to interrogate the fair hypocondriac ; when the generous bird, reassuming his natural affability and fetching a puritanic sigh, answers in a pedantic tone *Ave ma seur* : you may judge what peals of laughter this *Ave* produced in such a company. All joined in chorus to hiss the poor pilgrim.—Mortified at this indignity, half annihilated, and looking like a criminal descended from the pillory ; our hero felt that he had made a capital blunder, and that he should be ill received among the ladies unless he spoke the language of the Cavaliers : being naturally of a lofty and ambitious spirit, habituated, like other great personages, to the language of flattery, he could not stand the shock of universal contempt. In this unguarded, this inauspicious moment, VER-VERT, losing his patience, lost his primitive innocence. From this moment he curses in his heart the dear sisters who had been the kind instructors of his youth ; because they had not taught him all the nervous and brilliant sounds ; all the finesse and delicacies of their language. And now he turns the whole bent of his genius to learn them ; speaking little, but thinking not the less. The bird saw, for he was no fool, that, to learn a new language, he must for-

get that religious cant with which his pericranium was furnished : It was all forgot in less than two days ; so much that he found the dragoon stile more brilliant than that of the nunnery. In the twinkling of an eye, this eloquent and docile animal could *swear* and *blaspheme* like an old devil *sprinkled with holy water* : such is the alacrity of youth to learn evil ! he seems to have given the lie to that celebrated maxim : that no person becomes extremely wicked but by degrees ; for he became a professed reprobate all at once without passing any noviciate. How soon had he engraved in his memory the whole nautical alphabet of the Loire ! no sooner would one of our mariners rap out a *marbleu* than VER-VERT would echo to it. And now, like a profane orator, he grows proud of his infamous merit, having no higher ambition than to gain the applause of a profligate and degenerate world. Such is the influence of bad example.

But in the mean time, during these unhallowed scenes, how were you employed, chaste nymphs of the monastery of Nevers ? alas, no doubt, you are fasting and praying for the happy return of the most ungrateful of mortals ; a fickle wretch unworthy of your care, whose heart is now engaged to other lovers, regardless of you and all your fond endearments. I can see the hateful power of melancholy brooding over your

monastery with her dusky wings ; the grate and every parlor clad in solitary black, while silence almost reigns within your walls. But cease to pray for him ; sweet virgins, cease to weep ; VRR-VERT is equally unworthy of your prayers and tears : he is no longer that reverend bird you once knew him, that heart so pure, so generous, so devout : VER-VERT, shall I tell it you ? is a ruffin, a renegado, a notorious blasphemer. The envious winds have scattered your unavailing prayers in empty air ; and the nymphs of the waters have reaped the fruit of all your labours. Boast no more of his superior knowledge ; for what is genius without virtue ? think no more of him ; for he has shamefully prostituted his talents and his heart.

By this time, however, our travellers drew near to Nants where the dear sisters were impatiently languishing. The sun appeared to them to rise and set more slowly than common, as if his chariot wheels drove heavily. In this anxious situation, hope, ever ready to flatter its votaries, had painted our hero to their imagination as a prodigy of parts, a noble mind cultivated by education, a sweet singer from whom they would drink in the words of wisdom dropping like honey from his lips ; but alas ! how vain was their expectation !

The vessel at length arrives : the passengers disembark. A courier from the con-

vent was setting on the shore. For you must know that, from the time the first letter was sent off, she had been placed there every day upon duty : her eyes wandering over the distant waves seemed to hasten his coming. As they landed near this monastic sentinel, the cunning bird knew her by her prudish look, her great coif, her white gloves, her languishing voice, and still more by her little crucifix. He was enraged at the sight, and no doubt pronounced an anathema against her in the military stile ; chusing rather to follow some dragoon, whose language he knew, than to go and learn again his litanies, his reverence and ceremonies ; but to that hated lodging he must go, though ever so much against his will. In spite of all his exclamations, this courier carries him off. He pinched her cruelly by the way : some say her arm, others her bosom : they dont agree about the place ; but that is of no great importance. The holy sister, though with great trouble, brings him at length to the nunnery, and notifies his arrival. At this news, which flies like lightning through the convent, the great bell is rung. The nuns were at prayers ; they leave every thing : they run as if they had wings : it is he, sister ; he is in the grand parlor ! they throng, they croud the grate and fly like bees thick issuing from the hive. Even the ancient ladies of slow and measured step seemed to have forgot the weight of

years ; and mother Angelica run then for the first time in her life.



## C A N T O 4th.

AT last the long expected hero makes his appearance ; nor can they satiate their eyes in viewing and admiring his beauties : and no wonder ; for the rogue, though less virtuous, was not the less handsome. His cavalier look and military air gave him new charms. What a pity, that grace and majesty should thus shine in the face of a traitor ! why can't we always discern the inward deformity of the mind by an equal turpitude of feature ? In extolling the singular beauties of his person, all the sisters spoke at once, as will often happen in *graver* assemblies ; and during the universal buzz of this swarm of females, it would have been impossible to have heard the report of a cannon discharged at the gate. But our cadet, amidst all this uproar, without speaking a devout word, rolled his eyes like a young officer of the guards. This was the first offence. This air of effrontary scandalized the whole community. And when mother Prioress with an august air of interior devotion, endeavoured to reason with the libertine ; our spark with

a look of disdain, though perhaps without reflecting on the indecency of the expression, answers her abruptly : *Parla corbleu que les nones sont folles !* O fye, my dear brother, says sister St. Augustin with a sweet and coaxing voice, thinking to pacify him : the dear brother salutes her with an *allez vous en pre-tain*. Oh blessed Jesus ! this parrot is a conjurer, mother, Christ have mercy upon us all ! what a notorious rogue. But VER-VERT, like a true jail-bird, hallos out *B—r your eyes*. In a word, every one of the sisters came to curb the saufsiness of this young grenadier, and each of them got her proper ditty. Cocking his eye, and listening to the chattering of the young-nuns, after a short pause, he would tune his pipe and run over each of their parts in a charming *recitativo*. At the scolding of the reverend ladies, he would set up a contemptuous laugh, and, in a snuffing tone, begin to imitate their nazal sounds. But at last, when our gallant, out of all patience with their insipid stuff, glowing with anger and foaming with rage like an old pirate, began to thunder out all the horrible language he had learned among the dragoons on the Loire, cursing and blaspheming like an infernal spirit, he made the grand parlor ring. Hell seemed to pass in review before the holy sisters. There was nothing to be heard in the nunnery but *foudre ! sacre didu ! mille pipes de diable !* the whole grate tremb-

led with horror. The nuns silent and crossing themselves, run headlong down to the cellars of the convent ; for they thought the end of the world was come : and mother Cunigond, it is said, falling down by the way, lost the last of her teeth. The general opinion was, that he was possessed with a devil, and that he spoke Greek. *Pere eterne!* says sister Bibian, Lord have mercy upon us ! ah, who has sent this Antechrist among us ; this incarnate devil ? O sweet Jesus ! with what conscience can he swear so, like a damned soul ? is this the famous parrot whose wit and learning was so much extolled ? I desire to see no more of him. *O dieu d'amour*, says sister *Ecoute*, what shocking talk ! Is it possible ! do our sisters of Nevers speak such language as this ? Is this the way they instruct youth ? what a heretic ! *O divine sageesse !* God forbid that this lucifer should stay in our garrison.

Upon the whole, it was resolved to put VER-VENT in irons, and send him back to the place from whence he came. He is unanimously proscribed and declared a heretic, detestible and abominable, attainted and convicted of attempting the virtue of the holy sisters. This *Auto dase*, or act of attainder, was signed by all the sisters, but not without shedding tears : for they thought it a pity that such a handsome youth in the flower of his age, should be such a consummate rake,

such an incorrigible heretic ; that such a rotten heart should lodge under such beautiful feathers. In consequence of the sentence, VER-VERT was put into an iron cage and sent back to Nevers as a prisoner of state.

But what language can paint, what heart can conceive the grief of our sisters of Nevers, when they saw their beloved VER-VERT return in this deplorable situation ? They wept, they prayed, inconsolable : their hearts were overcome with sorrow : but alas, how impotent is the grief of helpless mortals ! no prayers, no tears, no groans can possibly recal or conceal what is past. For now, alas, nine venerable judges, dressed in tremendous robes and double veils, mount the tribunal ; awful in age, no less than wisdom ; for they had seen, four times at least, the\* *year of Jubilee return*. Poor VER-VERT is brought to the bar in his cage, without honor and without support. What avails his eloquence ? Condemned by law, he sees himself now deprived of counsel, and not so much as a sister to plead his cause. Nothing now remains but to determine the pains and penalties to be inflicted on him. Two of the sylls have already opened his death ; while two others, less rigid, are of opinion that, leaving him to the terrors of a guilty conscience, he should be sent back to that pro-

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\* Year of Jubilee, according to the bull of Sixtus IV. celebrated every twenty-fifth year.

fane coast where he first drew breath, there to undergo the austere discipline of the Bramins, that he may die, if penitent which they heartily pray, with the tail of a cow in his mouth : but the five last voices were unanimous for a corporal punishment. Finally, he is condemned to two months abstinence, three months of solitude, and four months of silence. And during the whole of this time, the said VER-VER is solemnly interdicted and cut off from all the pleasures of the garden, the toilet, the bed chamber ; and generally from all sweet meats and every other comfort of life. But this is not all. They chose for his keeper, his jailor and companion, an antiquated ape, the alceto of the convent : nor ought we rashly to blame their choice ; for it must be owned that this superannuated skeleton was a spectacle admirably suited to the eye of a penitent. However, in spite of the vigilance of this inflexible Argus, many of the amiable sisters in their leisure hours, found means to visit and condole with the fair prisoner, and soften the rigor of his confinement : Sister Rosamond, returning from vespers and morning prayers, has many a time brought him confections. But to a person in irons, deprived of his natural liberty, all the douceurs in the world an't worth a fig. Covered with shame and instructed in the school of adversity, the contrite bird at last came to himself : he se-

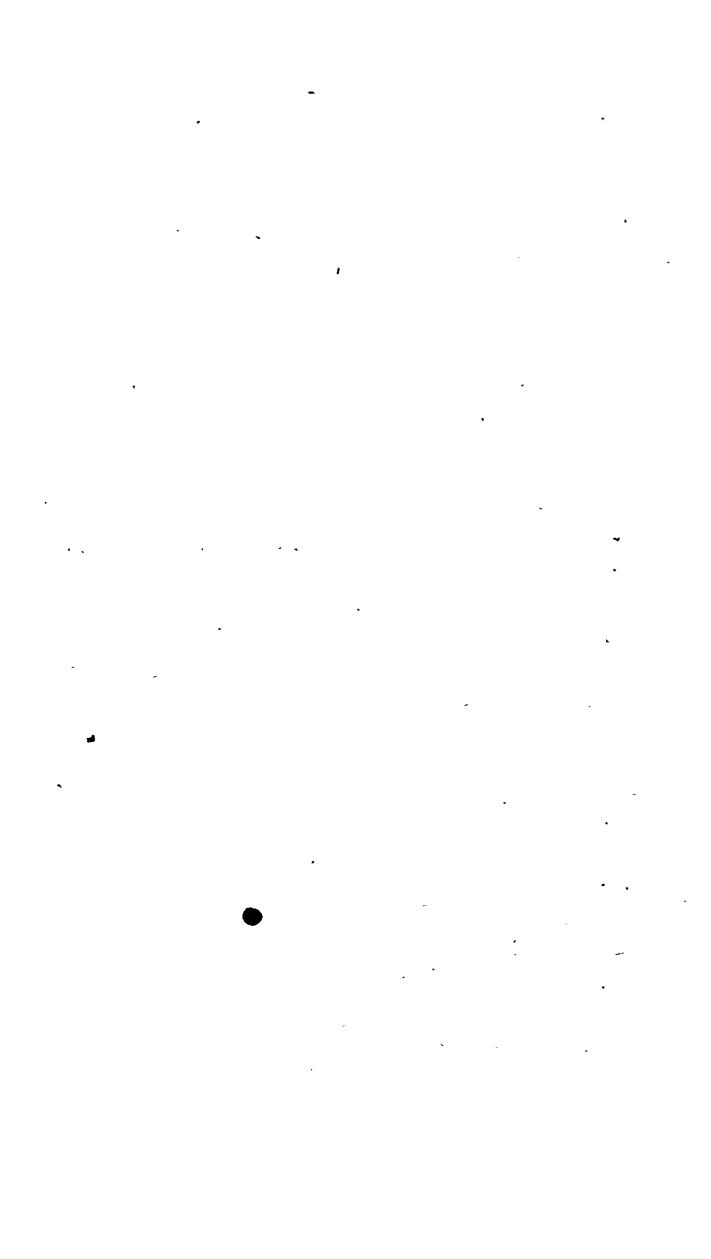
got the monk and the dragoons ; and recovering his proper tone in perfect unision with our sisters, became more devout than a prebendary. When fully assured of his conversion, the august divan, disarmed of its vengeance, graciously shortened the term of his penance. And now the memorable day of his happy restoration begins to dawn, whose every moment is sacred to love, to mirth and social festivity. The parlors, the dortors is strewed with roses and every flower of fragrant smell : an elegant collation is prepared with coffee in perfection, accompanied with a song. The graces, who preside at the feast, give plenary indulgence, while heart felt joy smiles in every face. But oh, how short, how false, how tantalizing are all sublunary delights ! our sweetest pleasures often wear the sharpest sting. Death often lies in ambush on our sumptuous tables, and squeezes poison in the cup of joy ! such was our hero's fate. Passing too quickly from a long lent of abstinence to swim in all the pleasures of a Carnival, cloy'd with syrups and burnt with liquors, VER-VERT falls down amidst a world of sweets. In vain the sisters strove to recall his wandering soul or detain his parting breath : their efforts only hasten his departure. Thus fell our HERO, expiring in the arms of pleasure ; a sacrifice to their too tender love. His last and dying words were

much admired by all the sisterhood, and will be long remembered. The Paphian goddess came at last and kindly closed his eyes, leading him to those happy mansions where heroic birds reside.

The death of this illustrious personage was universally lamented by all who had the happiness of his acquaintance ; but more feelingly by the dear sisters, whose grief was such as far exceeds the power of language to express. The circular letter written on the occasion was composed by the sister depository of the monastery : and from that authentic record, I have taken the materials of his history.

His picture was drawn from the life, to gratify the curiosity of future ages : and many a fair hand guided by love has endeavored to give him a second life as long as colors and embroidery can last.

Under a sacred myrtle, which still continues to flourish on his tomb, his remains were deposited, with all the funeral honors due to the memory of such a hero. But his spirit and loquacity rests as a legacy with the nuns, and will be transmitted from sister to sister through all generations.



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LAURETTE;  
OR  
INNOCENCE BETRAYED,  
AND  
*Virtue Unstained:*  
A MORAL TALE,  
FROM THE FRENCH OF  
MARMONTELL.

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Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom you trust,  
Did you but think how seldom fools are just;  
So many of your sex would not in vain,  
Of *broken vows* and *faithless men* complain.  
Of all the various wretches love has made,  
How few have been by *men of sense* betray'd?  
Convinc'd by reason, they your power confess,  
Pleas'd to be happy, as you're pleas'd to bless,  
And conscious of your worth can never love you less. }

Rowe.

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IT happened, on the feast of the village of Coulange, that the Marquis of Clancy, whose castle is near that place, came with his company to enjoy that rural dive

on. Thus indolence often chaceeth her votaries from the arms of luxury, and forces them in spite of themselves to seek for amusement in the pure and simple pleasures of nature.

Among the young maidens whom love had assembled to dance under the spreading Elm, it was easy to distinguish Laurette by the elegance of her shape, the regularity of her features, and that easy grace more captivating than beauty. Ladies of quality who valued themselves on their beauty could not help confessing that they had never seen any thing so charming. They brought her into their company, they viewed her with all the curiosity that a Connoisseur would examine a masterpiece of art. Look up, child, said these ladies. What vivacity, what sweetness, what pleasure shines in her looks ! did she but know the language they speak ! what conquests would an artful coquet make with such eyes ! and that little mouth ; those rosy lips that, as she breathes, perfume the air with odors sweeter than the spices of Arabia ! how pure is the enamel of her teeth ? her complexion is a little tanned with the sun ; but its the colour of health. Do but observe that ivory neck ; with what delicate and nice proportion it rises tapering from her pretty shoulders. Was she but dressed a la-mode, how charming would she appear ! and that sweet rising bosom formed by the hand of love ! upon my honour this is something

droh! how prodigal is nature of her gifts? to place such beauty in a cottage! Laurette, how old are you?—I was fifteen last month.—Why, you'll soon be married then no doubt?—my father says its time enough.—Well, Laurette, but han't you got some little cupid in your heart?—I dont know, madam, what a little cupid means.—Why, some young spark you would chuse to have for a husband—I don't trouble my head about that: my father must get me one when he thinks proper.—What employment does your father follow?—he works on his land.—Is he rich?—no: but he says he is happy if I behave myself well.—And how do you pass your time?—I help my father: I work with him.—With him! what! do you labour the ground?—yes: but the labour of the vineyard is not very hard: the planting and tending the vines and gathering the vintage is only an amusement to me.—Poor child! I an't surpris'd these pretty hands are so tanned. What a pity she should be born in such a low and obscure condition.

Laurette, who in her village had only excited envy, was a little surpris'd to become an object of pity. As her father had always carefully concealed from her every thing that could give her uneasiness, it had never entered into her thoughts that she was to be pitied. But when she cast her eyes on the dress of these women, she saw that they

some reason. What a vast difference was there between her dress and theirs ! with what admiration did she behold the glittering gems that sparkled in their ears and on their hands, and shone in all the blaze of noon upon their feet ! with what elegance was their hair arranged ! what new attractive graces did the ribbons, the lace and the fine lawns give to their half naked bosoms ! It is true, these women had not, like her, that lively air of superfluous health : but how was it possible for Laurette to imagine that the luxury that dazzled her was the cause of that languor which paint itself could not disguise ? As she was musing on these things, the Count de Luzy came up and invited her to dance with him. He was young, sprightly, of an elegant shape, and too alluring for Laurette.

Although she had not a nice taste in dancing ; she could not but observe, in the dignity, the precision and graceful ease of the Count's motions something very different from the jumping of the young peasants. She had sometimes felt her hand pressed ; but never by a hand so soft. The Count, in dancing, followed her with his eyes. Laurette found that his looks gave life and soul to the dance : and whether she was ambitious to give the same to hers, or love, by a kind of electricity, communicated a spark from her heart to her eyes ; it is certain they

answered those of the Count by the most natural expression of joy and sentiment.

Soon as the dance was ended, Laurette sat down at the foot of the elm, and the Count placed himself beside her.—You must be my partner, my pretty girl: I mean to dance with none but you.—You do me too much honor, sir; but that would affront my companions: the folks in our town are jealous.—They have reason to be jealous to see you so handsome: our folks in the city would be so too: that misfortune will follow you every where. Ah, Laurette! if in Paris, among those women whose beauty is only artifice, you was all of a sudden to appear with these natural charms you are so little sensible of!..—I sir, in Paris! what should I go there for? to be the joy of every eye and the idol of every heart. Hear me, Laurette, we have not the liberty of talking together here. But, in two words, it will be your own fault, if instead of a poor cottage and a vinyard to drudge in; it will be your own fault if you don't get in Paris, a palace shining with gold, a table served according to your wishes, the finest of furniture, a most elegant chariot, robes for every season and of every color: in a word every thing that can make life easy, comfortable and delicious, without any other care but that of enjoying it and loving me as I love you. You will think of it at

your leisure. On Sunday evening there will be a dance at the Castle : all the youth of the village is invited to it. You will be there, my dear Laurette, and there you will tell me if my love is agreeable to you ; if you accept my offers. All I ask of you at present is to keep the secret, and that inviolably. Keep it as your life : if it escapes you, all the happiness that waits you will vanish like a dream.

Laurette in reality thought she had awaked from a dream. The brilliant fortune that had been painted to her was so distant from her present low estate, that a passage so easy, and so sudden, from the one to the other was inconceivable. Yet the amiable young man who had made her these offers did not look like a deceiver. He had spoke to her so seriously ! she had seen in his looks and in his language so much truth, so much sincerity. I should have easily perceived, says she, had he meant to make a jest of me. But what can be the meaning of this *secrecy* he so much recommends ? In making my fortune, he expects that I should love him : there is nothing more reasonable ; but surely he intends my father should share in my good fortune : why then should we conceal ourselves from my father ? Had Laurette been acquainted with the *arts of seduction*, she would easily have comprehended the meaning of this secret : she had prudence enough to guard her from the blunt liberties of the young Peasants ;

but in the polite and respectful behaviour of the Count she saw nothing that could offend her modesty or alarm her virtue.

Taken up with these reflections, and her head full of the shining images that had been presented to her, she returned to her humble dwelling. Every thing there seemed to have changed its appearance; and Laurette, for the first time, blushed to see herself in a cottage. The simple furniture that necessity had made so precious look'd mean and contemptible: the household affairs that lay upon her hands began to grow troublesome: she could no longer relish that bread that was wont to taste so sweet, as being the fruit of her labor; and on that straw couch where she used to sleep so sound, she now sighs for the gilded apartments and voluptuous beds of luxury.

It was much worse next morning, when she must return to her labor, and bear, on the burning hill, the intolerable heat of the day. In Paris, says she, I should only awake to new pleasures without any other care but to love and to please. The Count told me so. How amiable is the Count! among all the girls in our village he took notice of none but me; he even left the ladies of the castle to wait on me. He is not proud; yet one would think he had enough to make him so. It seemed as if I favored him in preferring him to our young men: he thanked me with look

tender ; with an air so humble, so moving ! had he spoke to the Lady of the Manor, he could not have been more polite. By good luck, I was tolerably well dressed : but was he to see me to day ; la ! what a dress ; what a shocking figure I should make !

The disgust of her situation only increased for three long and tedious days of fatigue she had to endure before she saw the Count again.

The moment which both expected with impatience arrives. All the youth of the village are assembled at the Castle ; and in a shady arbor, the music striking up gives the signal for a dance. Laurette advances with her companions ; but not with assurance as at the village feast, but with an air of modesty and reserve. This was a new attraction for Luzy, a bashful modest grace instead of a sprightly fluttering nymph. He saluted her respectfully, but without any sign of acquaintance. He took care not to come nigh her or dance with her till another had given him the example. It was the Chevalier de Soligny, who ever since the village feast had been incessantly talking of Laurette in a kind of rapture. Luzy took him for a rival and watched his motions with some uneasiness : but Laurette had no occasion to observe his jealousy, in order to make him easy. As she danced with Soligny, her look was roving, her air indifferent, and her whole deportment cool and negligent. When Luzy's

turn came to dance with her, he could perceive, as he saluted her, every feature reanimating, every grace springing up, while a crimson blush overspread her lovely face : a stolen and almost imperceptible smile moved her rosy lips ; and a look full of tenderness filled his heart with love and joy. His first motion, had he been alone, would have been to fall down in humble adoration at her feet : but he restrained even the ardor of his looks ; his hand alone pressing hers, expressed in trembling the transports of his soul.

My dear Laurette, says he, soon as the dance was ended, let us retire a little from your companions. I am impatient to know what your resolution is.—Not to take a step without the consent of my father, and to follow his advice in every thing. If you do any thing for me, I would have him to share in it ; and if I go along with you it must be with his consent.—Ah ! beware of consulting him : he is the person I am most afraid of. In love matters, there are some forms and ceremonies among you, which my rank and character will not allow me to observe. Your father would subject me to these formalities ; he would require a thing impossible ; and, on my refusal, would accuse me of deceiving you. He knows not how much I love you. But you, Laurette, do you believe me capable of wronging you ?—Alas, no : I believe you goodness itself. You would be very de-

ceitful if you was wicked!—Dare you then  
 trust me?—It is not that I *distrust* you; but I  
 cannot *conceal* myself from my father: I be-  
 long to him, I depend upon him. If what  
 you propose to me is *proper*, he will *consent*  
 to it.—He will never consent to it. You will  
 have lost me: you will be sorry for it: alas,  
 it will be too late; and you for life will be  
 condemned to hard labor, which you seem  
 to love as you dare not leave it. Ah! Lau-  
 rette, were these delicate hands ever made  
 to dig the earth? Must the scorching sun and  
 bleak winds destroy that fine complexion!  
 must you in whom nature has assembled all  
 that is amiable and sweet; must you, Lau-  
 rette, waste the flower of your days in ob-  
 scurity, condemned to be the drudge of some  
 unmanly clown; perhaps to end your days in  
 wretched poverty, without tasting any of  
 those pleasures that ought ever to wait on  
 your steps! but this is what you prefer to all  
 the delights of riches and ease that I have  
 laid at your feet. And what is it, after all,  
 that frightens you? Is it the fear of causing  
 some moments uneasiness to your father?—  
 Yes: your father will be grieved at your ab-  
 sence: but afterwards what will be his joy  
 when he sees you in possession of my riches  
 in which he will liberally share? what an  
 agreeable violence will you do him, when  
 you force him to leave his cottage and spend  
 the remainder of his days in ease? for then

I shall not fear his refusal : my happiness, yours and his will then be inseparable.

It was hard for Laurette to resist such a temptation ; *but she did resist* ; and had it not been for the fatal incident that threw her again into the snare ; the *instinct of innocence alone would have preserved her from it*.

In a storm that fell upon the village of Coulange, the hail destroyed the hopes of the vintage and the harvest. The desolation was general. During the tempest, a thousand doleful cries were heard amidst the noise of the winds and thunder : but when its fury was spent, and the light of day, more terrible than darkness, began to discover the branches of the vine stript of their clusters, the ears of corn hanging on the broken stalk, the fruits of the trees beat down or crushed to a jelly ; the whole face of the country was overspread with one vast and gloomy silence ; the highways were covered with a multitude of poor creatures with pale and ghastly faces ; who stood immoveable and with a mournful eye contemplated their ruin and wept the lost treasures of the year ; while desolation, poverty and death, stared them in the face. In the door of every cottage you could see the weeping mother pressing the tender infant to her bosom, saying, as she wiped the tears from her eyes, who will suckle thee if we want bread ?

At the sight of this calamity, the first idea that presented itself to Luzy, was that of the grief in which Laurette and her father must be plunged. Impatient to fly to their relief, he concealed his motive under the veil of pity for the common distress. Let us go to the village, says he to his company; let us bring them some consolation. It will cost but a trifle to each of us, to save twenty families from despair. We have been partakers of their joy; let us also partake in their grief.

These words made a suitable impression on their tender hearts. The Marquis of Clan-cy, who really pitied their distress, gave the example. He went in person to his poor farmers, offered his assistance, promised them further relief, and raised their drooping spirits. While tears of gratitude were flowing round him, the gentlemen and ladies of his company went through the village, entered into every house, where they left tokens of their generosity, and tasted the noble and delicious pleasure of relieving merit in distress. By this time Luzy, like one half-distracted, was running up and down in search of Laurette. He is told where she lives; and as he hastens there, he sees a Peasant sitting in the door, with his head leaning on his knees, and covering his face with both hands as if afraid to see the light. It was the father of Laurette. My friend, says the Count, I see you are in trouble; but don't be in despair; hea-

ven is just ; and among men there are some tender hearts. What, sir, says the peasant raising his head, *does it become a man who has served his country twenty years, and spent his best blood in defence of its liberties ; does it become him to live upon charity ?* It is from the earth, which I labor with the sweat of my brow, that I must ask my living : must I now commence *beggar* ? The Count was surprised to see such a noble and haughty spirit in a person so obscure. Then you have been in the army it seems ?—Yes, sir, I carried arms under the Duke of Berwick, and was in all the campaigns of Maurice. My father, till an unhappy law-suit stripped him of his estate, had enough to support me in the rank I had obtained. But at the very time we were reduced, he was ruined without resource. We came here to bury ourselves from the world ; and out of the wreck of our fortune we purchased a small farm which I cultivated with my own hands. Our former condition being unknown here, this, in which I seemed to have been born, did me no discredit. I supported, I comforted my father in his old age. I married : that was my misfortune ; it is now I feel it when it is too late.—Your father then is not in life ?—Alas, no.—And your wife ?—She is happy not to have lived to see this woeful day.—Have you got any family ?—I have only one

daughter, poor creature? . . . Don't you hear her in the house: she hides herself from me for fear of grieving my heart. Luzy would fain have rushed into the cottage where Laurette was mourning; but he checked himself for fear of a discovery.

Here, says he to the father giving him his purse: this is but a trifle; but when you have occasion for a friend, think of the Count de Luzy: *I live in Paris.*

As he spoke these words, he went off without waiting for an answer. But how great was the astonishment of honest Basil, when he found in the purse such a considerable sum! Fifty Louis d'Ors, much more than double the revenue of his little vineyard. Come here, daughter, cries he; look at that person who is going away: it is no man; it is an angel from heaven. But what must I think? It is not possible he meant to give me all this. Go Laurette, run after him, and tell him he is mistaken. Laurette runs after Luzy, and overtaking him: my father, says she, can't believe that you meant to give him this present: it is too much: and he sent me to return it.—Ah! Laurette, is not all I have at your service and your fathers? can I pay him too well for being the means of bringing you into the world? give him this small present: it is only a token of my friendship; but take care to conceal the motive. Tell him only that I am happy to oblige a man of merit.

Laurette was going to thank him.—To morrow, says he, about break of day, as I pass by the end of your village, I will receive, if you please, your thanks and your farewell.—What! are you going away to-morrow?—Yes, Laurette, I am going away, the most amorous and the most unhappy of men!—At break of day . . . . that is just about the time that my father and I go to work.—What, together?—No, he goes first: I have the care of the house and that detains me a little. —And do you go the same road with me?—I cross your road a little above the village: but was I to go out of my road; its the least I can do for so many tokens of your friendship.—Farewell then, Laurette, *till to-morrow!* let me see you, were it but for a moment: it will be the last pleasure of my life!

Basil, on the return of Laurette, could no longer doubt of the Count's benevolence. O, generous young man! what a noble spirit! But let us not neglect, my daughter, what the hail has left us: the less there is, the more care we ought to take of it.

Laurette was so touched with the Count's generosity, so grieved to make him unhappy, that she slept none all night. Ah, if it was not for my father, says she, with what pleasure would I go with him! The next morning, Laurette did not put on her holiday clothes: but, in the extreme simpli-

her dress, she failed not to mix a little of that coquetry so natural to her age and sex. I shall never see him more : what signifies it whether he thinks me handsome or not. For a single moment it an't worth the while. Talking thus with herself she adjusted her cap and tucker. She took a fancy to carry him some fruit in the basket where she carried her dinner. He won't despise them, says she : I'll tell him that I gathered them ; and as she arranged them on a bed of vine leaves, she watered them with her tears.—Her father was now gone, and the silver light of the morning was just tinged with purple, when this poor child, with a full heart, arrived alone at the end of the village. In a moment after, the Count's diligence came in sight, which put her in a strange flutter. Soon as ever Luzy could perceive her, he sprang from his carriage ; and coming up to her with a sorrowful countenance : I am very sensible, my dear Laurette, of the favor you have done me. I have at least the comfort to see that you are not insensible of my pain ; I believe you are sorry to make me unhappy —It breaks my heart, says Laurette, and I would give all you have done for us that I had never seen you.—And I, Laurette, would give all I am worth never to part with you.—Alas, and does it not depend upon you ? my father could refuse you nothing : he loves and honors you. These fathers are cruel ;

they want people to *marry* ; and that an't in *my power* ! let us think no more of it. You and I are going to part, we are going to part forever ; we who, if you had pleased, would never have ceased to love and live for each other, and enjoy together all those gifts that fortune has so liberally bestowed on me and love on you. Ah, you cannot conceive what pleasures awaited us. Had you but the least idea of them ! did you but know what you are parting with !—Alas, without knowing it, I feel it. Believe me, sir, since I saw you, all the world is nothing to me. At first, my mind was taken up with the fine things you promised me ; but all that is vanished : I think no more of them ; I think of nothing but you. Ah, if my father was but willing ! . . .—What occasion is there to consult your father ? did you ask your father if you should love me ? does not our happiness lie in our own breast ? Love and honor, Laurette, are *my titles* and *your security* : can there be any thing more sacred, more inviolable ? Ah, believe me, when the heart is given, the ceremony is over, and the hand ought to follow it. Give me that hand then, that I may kiss it a thousand times !—There it is, says she, while the tears dropt from her eyes.—It is mine, cries he, this dear hand ; it is mine : it was love that gave it me ; and he that takes it from me must take my life ! yes, Laurette—

I die at your feet, if I must part with you ! Laurette verily believed that, if she left him, he could not live a moment longer. Alas, says she, and shall I be the cause of it ?—Yes, cruel woman, you will be the cause of it. You wish my *death* : you wish it !—Heaven knows I don't : I would give my life to save you.—Give me a proof of it then, offering a kind of violence to her ; give me a proof of it and go along with me.—No : I cannot, I cannot without the consent of my father.—Well, leave me ; leave me to despair ! At these words Laurette, pale and trembling, with a heart full of grief and terror, had neither the courage to *keep*, nor *quit* the hand of Luzy. With eyes swimming in tears she followed the wild looks of the Count. Do, pity me, says she, and look on me without anger. I *was* in hopes you would have accepted this small present ; but now I dare not offer it.—What is it ? fruit, to me ! Ah, cruel woman, you insult me : it is *poison* you ought to give me : and throwing the basket violently from him, he retired furious.

Laurette took this for a sign of hatred ; and her heart already too much softened, could not bear this last stroke. Scarce had she strength to go a few steps when she fainted and fell down at the foot of a tree. Luzy runs to her, finds her bathed in tears, without color and almost without life. He is disconsolate, nor thinks of any thing but to re-

store her to life : but soon as he finds her spirits returning, he takes advantage of her weakness ; and before she comes to herself, *she is far enough from the village in the Count's chariot, in the arms of her ravisher.*—Where am I says she, opening her eyes ? Ah Count is it you ? Are you bringing me back to the village ?—Life of my soul, says he pressing her to his bosom, it is but a moment since our parting had like to have cost both of us our life. Let us never more expose two hearts so tender to such a fiery trial.

I give myself to thee, my Laurette 'tis on thy lips I swear to be forever thine.—I ask no more, says she, than to be forever yours. But my father ! shall I leave my father ? has he not a right to dispose of me ?—O, my Laurette, I will enrich thy father. He shall share in the happiness of his daughter : we shall both be his children : trust my love with the care of pacifying and comforting thy father. Let me dry up thy tears ; and allow mine to fall in thy bosom : they are the tears of joy, the tears of pleasure ! The dangerous Luzy mixed with this language every thing that could captivate a female heart ; and Laurette was too sensible of it. But the image of her distressed father seeking his daughter all the day long, and returning at night to his solitary dwelling now the habitation of despair : this image ever present to her thoughts, haunted her like a ghost, and made

her unhappy. It was necessary to soothe her grief.

Luzy drove full speed with the glasses up, his people were faithful, and Laurette did not leave a track behind her. It was an essential point with Luzy to conceal his prize. But he detached one of his men, who, from a village distant from the road, forwarded this letter to the Curate of Coulange, in which Luzy had disguised his hand. "*Tell Laurette's father to make himself easy: that she is well, and that the lady, who has taken her along with her, will be as careful of her as of her own child. In a short time he will hear further from her.*"

This letter, though far from comforting the father, operated on the daughter as an opiate to blunt the painful sense of her elopement. The subtle flame of love had reached her heart, and opened every avenue of pleasure. From that moment the clouds of grief began to dissipate; the source of her tears was dried up; and a transient but profound oblivion of every thing but her lover gave a relish to their stolen embraces.

That kind of distraction, which commonly seizes young people on their first arrival in Paris, contributed not a little to banish from her mind all serious reflexion. Her house was a romantic palace. Every thing there had the air of enchantment. The bath, the toilet; the social pleasures of the table; the

charms of music ; the delicious repose that love indulges, were only some of the various forms that pleasure assumed to captivate her every sense. When she awaked she thought herself still in a dream. And when she awoke, she saw herself surrounded by women attentive to serve, and jealous to please her. She who had ever been accustomed to obey, had now nothing to do but command. You are queen here, says her lover, and I am your principal servant.

Imagine, if it is possible, the surprise and rapture of a young creature taken from a cottage, to see her hair rising, under the hand of art, in form of a diadem adorned with flowers and diamonds ; to see a variety of the most elegant dresses displayed before her eyes and courting her choice ; to see her beauty emerging like the sun from behind a cloud, while it is reflected and multiplied by the brilliant mirrors that surround her. Nature indeed had been liberal of her gifts to Laurette, even to profusion : but some of these gifts wanted cultivation ; and artists of every kind came in crowds to dispute the care of improving her mind, and the honor of adorning her person. Luzy possessed and adored his conquest, intoxicated with love and joy.

During all this time, honest Basil was the most unhappy of fathers. Being naturally of a lofty spirit, jealous of his honor, and

above all things tender of the reputation of his daughter, he had sought her every where, and expected her in vain, without publishing his uneasiness ; and nobody in the village knew any thing of his misfortune. The Curate was the first who brought him the news, communicating to him the letter he had received. Basil gave little credit to the letter ; but dissembling with the priest, my daughter is virtuous, says he, but she is young, simple and credulous. Some women has taken a fancy to her and overpersuaded her to prevent my refusal. Let us not raise a clamor about an imprudence of youth, nor let any one think that my daughter has left me without my consent. The secret is known only to you ; and I hope you will be tender of my reputation and hers. The Curate, being a prudent honest man, promised and kept silence. But Basil, inwardly a prey to grief, passed his days and nights in tears. What has become of her, said he ? can she have gone away with a woman ? is there any woman so mad as to steal a girl from her father and expose herself to a criminal prosecution for a rape ?\* no, no, it is some *ravisher* who has *seduced and ruined her* ! O ! if I could find him out : his blood or mine should pay for it. He went himself to the village from which they had brought the let-

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\* The translator here has certainly made a mistake. How could a *woman* be prosecuted for a rape ? Editor.

fer. With the help of the Curate's directions he came to discover the person who had undertaken the message : he examined him : but could draw nothing from him but a confused and vague story. The situation of the place only served to put him on a wrong track. It was six leagues distant from the route Luzy had taken and in a contrary direction. But could Basil have connected the Count's departure with his daughter's elopement, he never would have suspected a young man of his virtue. He continued then to mourn inwardly till some ray of light should come to clear up his suspicions. My God, says he, it seems it was in your anger you gave me this child. And I, short sighted mortal, rejoiced to see her grow in stature and in beauty. What was then my pride is now my shame. O, that she had died the moment she was born !

Laurette tried to persuade herself that her father was easy ; and the regret of leaving him touched her but slightly. Love, vanity, the taste of pleasure ; that taste so poignant in its infancy, the care of cultivating her talents ; in a word, a thousand various amusements ever new took up her time and employed her thoughts. Luzy, who loved her to idolatry, and was afraid of losing her, exposed her as little as possible to public view ; but he contrived every means that the wit of man could invent to be invisible in the midst

of a croud: This was enough for Laurette : happy to please the man she loved, she felt none of that restless ambition, that itching desire to see and be seen, that leads so many fine women to our theatres and public gardens. Though Luzy, by a judicious choice of a few amiable men, made his table entertaining enough, she was only taken up with him : and without disoblighing any one, she knew how to make him sensible of it. The art of reconciling our predilections with decency and politeness is only known to delicate souls : *coquetry* makes a study of it ; but *love* knows it without learning.

Six changing moons insensibly had slipped away in this delicious unison, this society of two souls formed for love and for each other ; without society, and without disgust, and without jealousy, save that which springs from love and is inseparable from it ; save that self-diffident but ambitious jealousy which ever prompts the lover to acquire whatever he thinks can render him more amiable.

In this interval, Laurette's father had twice received letters from his daughter with presents from the lady who had taken her into her friendship. It was to the Curate that Luzy addressed himself. As the packets came by post, and without any name, it would have been impossible for Basil to return them : his refusal of them would have made people suspect what he wanted to conceal ;

and he trembled lest the priest should have the same suspicions with himself. Alas, said this good father to himself, my daughter is perhaps virtuous. Every appearance is against her ; but they are only appearances : and were my suspicions just, I ought to *mourn*, but not to *dishonor* my child.

Heaven must have looked down with compassion on the virtues of this worthy father ; and to that perhaps we ought to ascribe the incident I am going to relate.

The small commerce in wine, which Basil carried on, obliged him to come to Paris. As he passed through that immense city, he was stopped by an embarras of coaches in the street. The voice of a woman in a fright drew his attention. He sees, he dares not believe his eyes . . . *his daughter Laurette in a gilt chariot, dressed in a shining robe, and glittering with diamonds !* her father would not have known her if, on perceiving him, her surprise and confusion had not made her start back and cover her face. By the attempts she made to conceal herself, and still more by a cry that escap'd her, he could not doubt but it was she. While they were disengaging the carriages that had run foul of each other, Basil slips between the wall and his daughters coach, and stepping up to the door says with an austere voice to Laurette : *where do you lodge ?* Laurette with fear and trembling tells him her lodg-

*And by what name are you known?—I am called Coulange, says she, from the place of my nativity.—The place of your nativity!—wretched creature! : . . . . This evening about sun down be at home ; and be there alone.* At these words he steps down and goes on his way.

The stupid astonishment that had seiz'd Laurette was scarce dissipated when she found herself at home.

Luzy was to sup in the country. She now saw herself left alone in the moment when she had the greatest need of counsel and support. She was going to appear before her father ; a father she had betrayed, deserted, and covered with shame and sorrow : her conduct now appear'd to her in its proper colors. She saw her nudity ; she saw and blush'd. The intoxication of love, the charms of pleasure had concealed from her this humiliating idea : but soon as the veil was drawn aside, she saw herself such as she must appear in the eyes of the world and in the eyes of her father. Startled at the examination and judgment she was to undergo : wretched creature ; cries she, melting into tears, where shall I fly ? where shall I hide myself ? My father, who is honor itself, will find me abandoned to vice, in the arms of a man to whom I can pretend no right. O my father ! O terrible judge ! how shall I appear in your presence ? It came more than once in her

thoughts to shun him and disappear ; but vice had not yet effaced in her soul the sacred laws of nature.—Shall I drive him to despair ? after meriting his resentment, shall I draw his curse on my head ? No : though I deserve not the name of his daughter ; I revere his sacred name, should he come to kill me, I ought to wait for him and fall down at his feet. But, no, a father is always a father. Mine will be touched with my tears. My age, the love, the generosity of the Count, every thing pleads for me ; and when Luzy has told his story, I shall not appear so criminal.

She would have been greatly mortified, had her servants been witnesses of the humiliating scene that was going to be acted. Happily she had told she was to sup with a friend ; and her women had taken that afternoon to themselves. It was easy to send the two footmen out of the way ; and when her father came, it was she that received him.

Are you alone, says he ?—Yes father. He enters with some emotion, and after looking her in the face in sad and mournful silence, he asks, with a voice that sounded like thunder in her ears : what is your employment in this house ? Laurette's answer was to fall down at his feet in tears. I see, says the father casting his eyes round in that apartment where every thing bespoke the opulence and luxury of its owner ; I see that vice is i—

element in this city. May I be allowed to ask who has been so kind as to enrich you in such a short time ; who has provided you with this costly furniture, these fine dresses, and that elegant equipage I saw you in ? Laurette answered only by her tears.—*Speak, says he, and weep afterwards : you will have time to weep at your leisure.*

On the relation of her adventure, in which she did not conceal or disguise the minutest circumstances, Basil passed from astonishment to indignation.—*Luzy ! says he, that nobleman ! . . . . There is the virtue of our NOBILITY ! Villain !* when he gave me his gold, did he think to purchase my daughter ? These men, who glory in their riches, look upon the honor of a poor man as a thing of no value, that may be bought and sold for a morsel of bread.—He flattered himself he would comfort me !—he made you believe so. Inhuman wretch ! how little does he know the tender feelings of a fathers heart !—No : since I lost you, I have never had a moments ease, never an hour of sound sleep. All day, the earth I laboured was watered with my tears : at night when you forgot yourself, when you was drown'd in pleasures, your father, on a bed of straw, was tearing his hair, and calling you with loud cries. But, alas, my cries, my groans never reached your heart. The image of your disconsolate fa-

ther never broke your rest : he was not in all your thoughts.

Ah ! heaven is my witness : had I thought to have given you so much uneasiness, I would have left all to fly to your arms. I honor you, I love you ; I love you more than ever. Alas, what a father I have grieved ? In the moment when I expected to find in you a severe judge, I hear nothing from your lips but reproaches full of kindness. When I fell down at your feet, I felt nothing but fear and shame ; but now I am overcome with tenderness : now I can weep with pleasure : O father, I could ever weep : my tears are sweet ; for they are tears of love !—Come then, my dear Laurette, come to my arms ; for I have found my daughter !—Your daughter, alas, I am not worthy of you !—Nay, be not discouraged. *Honor*, Laurette, is a great and fair inheritance : *INNOCENCE* is much greater ; and had I been to chuse, I rather would have seen you die than part with either. But when innocence and honor are both lost, there still remains a far more noble and more precious jewel ; it is *VIRTUE implanted in the soul, that principle which never dies* : if we wish for it, it springs afresh ; and when it seems extinct, one humble contrite thought can re-produce it. Here, my daughter, is an endless source of consolation ; and if your repentance is sincere, heaven and your father

are both appeased. Besides, nobody in the village knows your adventure : you may appear again without shame.—Where, father ?—At Coulange where I am going to carry you.—Laurette was thunder struck at these words. Make haste, says Basil, to strip you of these shameful ornaments. Plain linen with a short gown and peticoat is a more proper dress for you. Leave these poisoned gifts with the wretch that has seduc'd you and follow me without delay.

One must, at this moment, have the tender and delicate soul of Laurette ; must love a father and a lover as she did, to feel, to conceive the combat that now arises in her poor heart, between love and natural affection. The hurry and confusion of her spirits kept her immovable and silent.—*Come, said the father, time is precious.*—Pardon me, says Laurette, falling again on her knees, pardon me, father ; be not angry if I delay for a moment. You have read the most secret thoughts of my heart. Luzy wants the name of my husband ; but Luzy has over me every right that the tenderest love can give. I am resolved to leave him, to part with him, and follow you : I am firmly resolved upon it if it should cost me my life. But shall I run away from him in his absence and give him room to think I have betray'd him ? What do you say, wretched creature ? what signifies the opinion of a base seducer ? what *right*

can he claim from a love that has *ruined* and *dishonored* you? You *love* him! do you *love* your own *shame*? do you prefer his *unworthy presents* to the *innocence* he has robbed you of? do you prefer to your *father* the worst of your *enemies*? You *dare not* run away in his *absence*; you *dare not* leave him without his *consent*! Ah, when you was going to *leave your father*, and plunge him in despair, you was not so *timorous*; you had none of these *scruples*. And what do you expect from your ravisher? that he should protect you? that he should take you from under *my paternal authority*? Ah, let him come if he *dares*, to drive me from here. I am alone, without arms, and weakened by age; but they shall first see me stretched on the threshold of your door, calling for vengeance from God and man! your lover before he touches you shall first go over my body; and the passengers in the street shall say, with horror: there lies her FATHER, whom she disowns and her LOVER treads him under his feet!

Ah, father, says Laurette, terrified at this image, little do you know the man you abuse so cruelly! he is mildness and humanity itself. You would be respectable and sacred in his eyes.—Dare you mention to me the *respect* of one who *dishonors* me? do you imagine his flattering tongue will deceive me? I would not advise him to come in my sight: if you answer for him, I won't answer for my-

self.—Well, I ask you not to see him ; but allow me to see him only for a moment.—What do you ask ? to leave you alone with him ! Ah, do you imagine I shall have that complaisance for him ? he shall sooner tear my heart out. While he could conceal you from me, it was his fault, it was yours ; I was not responsible for it. But heaven has now put you under my protection ; and from this moment I shall be answerable for you. Come, child, it is just night : it is time for us to be going. Determine yourself : *deny* your father or *obey* !—You pierce me to the heart.—OBEY ! I say, or *fear my malediction* ! At these dreadful words the trembling Laurette had no longer strength to reply. She undresses herself before her father, and puts on, not without shedding tears, the dress he had prescribed for her. Father, says she, as she was just a going after him, dare I presume to ask you one favor ? You don't wish the death of him I am going to leave. Allow me to write him only two words, to tell him I go in obedience to you ; that you oblige me to follow you.—Do you want him to come and *carry you off a second time* ? No : I won't leave a single track behind you. Let him *die of shame*, if he will ; 'tis but what he deserves : but to die of *love* ! don't be uneasy, child ; *Rakes never die of that disorder*. So saying he takes his daughter gently by the hand and leads her out. And, early next

morning, embarking on the Seine, they returned to their own country.

The clock had just struck twelve when Luzy returns to his house, where he flatters himself that pleasure waits him and love impatiently calls him. All there is confusion and alarm.

Laurette's people tell him, with terror in their looks, that they know not what is become of her : that they had fought her in vain : that she had sent them out of the way, and taken that opportunity to give them the slip : that she had not sup'd with her friend as she had pretended : and that, in going away, she had left every thing, even to her diamonds and the robe she wore.

You must sit up for her, says Luzy, after a long silence. Don't go to bed : there is in this event something incomprehensible.

Love, ever ready to flatter itself, tried every conjecture that could possibly excuse Laurette ; but finding them all void of probability, gave way to the most cruel suspicions. An involuntary accident might have detain'd her : but to undress herself with her own hands in the absence of her servants, to go away in the evening, leaving the house in confusion ; all this, says he, bespeaks a premeditated flight. Is it heaven that has touch'd her heart ? can it be a scruple of conscience that makes her leave me ? Ah, could I but believe it ! But had she taken an honorable st—

she would have pitied me ; she would have wrote me, had it been but two words of consolation and farewell. Her letter could not have betray'd her ; and would have saved suspicions distressing to me and dishonorable to herself. Laurette, O heavens ! candor, innocence and truth itself ! can Laurette be treacherous and deceitful ? she who this morning . . . No, no : it is incredible . . . But alas, it is but too certain ! every moment, every reflection was a fresh proof of it. But hope stuck fast, and lingered in his heart, as loth to quit its hold. He struggled against persuasion as a dying man struggles against death. Were she to come back, says he, were she to come back innocent and faithful ; could my fortune, my life, and all my love repair the injury I have done her ? with what pleasure would I confess my fault ! with what transports, what tears would I atone for the crime of having accus'd her ! Alas, I dare not flatter myself with the hopes even of being unjust : I am sunk too low in misery.

There is nobody, I think who has lived in such a City as Paris, but must have sometimes felt, in the tedious hours of expectation, the torment of listening to the noise of the coaches : all are taken for the long expected one ; and each in its turn arrives, and carries, as it passes, our disappointed hopes along with it. In this cruel perplexity the wretched Luzzy remained till three o'clock in the morn-

ing. Every carriage he heard was perhaps that which brought back Laurette. But hope, so often disappointed, at last yielded to despair. I am betrayed, says he ; I can no longer doubt of it. It is a plot they have laid for me. The caresses of the treacherous creature only served to conceal it. Thus prudently chose the day I was to sup in the country. She has left every thing, to let me know she has no further occasion for my presence. Another no doubt liberally supplies her. The slenderest token of my love would incessantly have upbraided her treachery and ingratitude. She wants to forget me that she may freely give herself up to one she prefers to me. Perjured creature can she hope to find one that loves like me ? Alas, I lov'd her but too much : I set my heart too much upon her. Her desires, incessantly prevented, have been at last extinguished. Such creatures are women ! they tire of every thing, even of being happy. Ah, can'st thou be happy this moment, perfidious creature ! can'st thou be happy and think of me ? but little does she think of me : my love and grief are both alike to her. At this very moment, when I can scarce refrain from crying aloud, when I am watering her bed with my tears : at this very moment perhaps another man . . . . distracting thought !—it fills my soul with horror ! I shall find out that rival ; and should I live to see to-morrow's dawn, I shall not "

without revenge.—'Tis no doubt some of those pretended friends that I have imprudently brought to see her.—Perhaps Soligny . . . . He was taken with her when we saw her in the village . . . . She was simple and sincere then . . . How greatly is she changed . . . He wanted to see her again, and I like a poor simpleton, trusting in her and thinking myself beloved, introduced my rival to her. I may be mistaken ; but he is the man I suspect. I will be at the bottom of it in a moment. Follow me, says he to one of his attendants ; and day light was just appearing when he rapt at the Chevalier's gate, demanding to speak with him.—He is not at home sir, says the Swiss.—Not at home !—No, sir, he is gone into the Country.—Since when ; —Since yesterday in the evening.—At what hour ? —About sun set.—To what place of the country is he gone ? —That is what nobody knows : he took none with him but his Valet de chambre.—And in what carriage.—In his Vis a vis.—Does he propose to stay long ? --He wont return under two weeks : he desired me to keep his letters for him.—When he returns tell him I called for him and want much to see him.

Now says he, as he was going away, I am fully convinced. Every circumstance agrees. I have nothing to do now but find out the place of their retreat. I'll tear the villian

from her arms : I'll wash out the stain in his blood.

His researches were vain and fruitless. The Chevalier's journey remained an impenetrable secret. Luzy then was two weeks on the road ; and the full persuasion that Soligny was the ravisher diverted him from every other enquiry.

In his impatience he sent every morning to know if his rival was returned. At last the news is brought that he is just arrived. He flies to his house inflamed with rage ; and the kind reception he met with from the Chevalier only provoked him the more. My dear Count, says the Chevalier, you have call'd upon me very earnestly ; wherein can I serve you ? — In delivering me from a life that is a burden to me, says Luzy turning pale : or from a rival I abhor. You have taken my mistress from me ; and you have nothing to do now but to pluck out my heart. — My friend, says the Chevalier, I have as great a mind as you to have my throat cut ; but it shan't be by you, if you please. Let us begin by coming to a right understanding. They have carried off Laurette from you, you say ; I am heartily sorry for it : she was a charming creature ; but upon my honor it is not I. Not that I pretend to greater delicacy in that point : in love matters I give and take small liberties with my friends : and tho' I

love you sincerely, if Laurette had been inclined to deceive you for me rather than another ; I don't say that I would have been cruel. But as for running away with women, I don't approve of it ; that's too much ; and if you have no other reason for killing me, I would advise you to let me live, and take breakfast with me. Altho' the Chevalier's discourse had all the appearance of sincerity ; Luzzy still retained his suspicions. You disappeared, says he, the same evening, at the same hour, and you have kept yourself two weeks concealed : I know besides that you loved her formerly, and had a mind to have her at the time I took her.

You are very lucky my dear Count, in the humor I am in at present, that I love you enough to explain myself further. Laurette went away the same evening I did ; to this I have nothing to answer : it is one of those fatal rencounters that form the intrigue of romances. I thought Laurette handsome as an Angel, and I had a great longing for her most certainly : but if you mean to fight every man in that predicament ; the half of Paris I presume will be in danger. The important article then is the mystery of my journey and my absence. Very well : I will explain it to you.

I loved Madam Blanfon, or rather her estate, her birth and her interest at court : the lady has every thing in her favour

except her person. You know that if she is neither young nor handsome ; she is amorous enough. I had the good fortune to please her, and might perhaps have been what they call happy, without going so far as marriage. But marriage was my intention ; and by the help of that respectful modesty inseparable from a delicate passion, I shun'd every occasion of taking advantage of her foible. So much reserve disconcerted her. She had never seen a man so bashful and so much a novice. I was as modest as a maid : I was intolerably so. It would be tedious to tell you all the stratagems I employed to provoke an attack without surrendering. Never did a coquet use greater finesse to kindle fruitless desires. My conduct was a masterpiece of art ; but my widow was more artful ; she has made a fool of me at last. Seeing she must attack me in form, she spoke of marriage. Nothing could be more advantageous than her proposals ; her estate was at my disposal without reserve. There only remained one difficulty. I was very young, and she was not sufficiently acquainted with my character. In order to get acquainted, she proposed our passing some days tête à tête together in the country. Two weeks, says she, of liberty and solitude in the country discover one's character more than two years of ceremonial life in Paris. I fell into the snare : and she acted her part so well that I forgot my res-

tion. How frail is man ! having thus assumed the character of a husband, I was obliged to support it : I endeavoured to give her the best opinion of me I was able ; but she soon imagined that my love was abated. It was in vain for me to assure her it was still the same : she told me she was not to be imposed upon by empty words. In short this morning when I awak'd I received from her the following dismissal sign'd by her own hand :—*" I am satisfied, sir, with the slight proof I have had of your sentiments. You may depart when you please. I want a husband whose complaisance will never fail ; who will always love me, and always in the same degree."* This, sir, is my adventure : are you satisfied with it ? you see it is very different from what you laid to my charge. I was carried off as well as your Laurette ; and I heartily wish, my friend, they may not have served her as they have served me. — But now that you are undeceived as to me ; have you no other suspicion ?—I am bewildered, says Luzy : I hope you will excuse the step I have taken, and impute it to my love, my grief, and my despair.—Psha ! says Soligny ; there was nothing more reasonable. If I had carried off your mistress, I ought to have given you satisfaction. But I am clear of that ; so much the better : we are now good friends : will you take breakfast with me ?—I would take *poison* if I had it !—that

would be *too violent* a medicine : you must *reserve* that for a more *urgent occasion*. Your Laurette is handsome tho' perhaps a little roguish : you must try to get her back ; but if you can't get her, I would advise you to get another, and the sooner the better.

While Luzy was thus in desperation, and scattering his money by handful's to discover the tracks of Laurette ; she was at home with her father, weeping for her fault, or rather for her lover.

Basil had told in the village that he could not spare his daughter, and that he had been to fetch her home. They thought her more beautiful than when she left them. Her graces were now in their full bloom ; and, even in the eyes of the country people, the air of the city had greatly improved her. The young men who had formerly courted her renewed their suit with more ardor than ever. But her father refused them all. You shall never marry while I am alive, says he ; I will deceive nobody. Work and weep with me. I have returned your unworthy lover all his presents. We have nothing of him but the shame.

Laurette, humble and submissive, obeyed her father without murmuring and without daring to look him in the face. It was incredibly hard for her to re-assume the habit of poverty and labor. Her tender feet were

hurt, and her delicate hands wounded with the briars ; but these were but trifling evils. Bodily pain, says she, is nothing compared to the cruel torments of the mind !

Though Luzy was ever present to her thoughts, and her heart could not be disengaged from him ; she had neither the hope nor the will to return to him. She knew how much her misconduct had embittered the life of her unhappy father ; and had she been at liberty to leave him again, she would not have consented to it. But the image of that grief, in which she had left her lover, followed her like her shadow, and tormented her. The right he had to accuse her of treachery and ingratitude was a fresh torment.—Could I but write to him ! but they have neither left me the liberty nor the means of doing it. It is not enough to abandon him ; they would have me forget him. Alas, I could sooner forget myself ; and it is as impossible for me to hate as to forget him. If he has committed a fault, his love was the cause of it ; and it don't become me to punish him. In every thing he has done he has aim'd at my happiness and that of my father. He has unhappily mistaken the road that leads to true happiness, and has misguided me ; but it was love that blinded his eyes. Yes : it is a duty I owe him and myself to explain my conduct to him ; and in this alone my father shall not be obeyed. The only difficult-

ty was to procure the means of writing him; but her father, without intending it had saved her that trouble.

One evening Luzy, coming home more sorrowful than ever, received an anonymous packet. The hand that wrote the address was unknown to him; but the contents spoke loud enough. He opens it with precipitation: he knows the purse he had given to Basil with the fifty Louis d'ors, and two like sums he had conveyed to him since. I see plain enough, says he, I have been discovered. The father sends back my presents with indignation. Haughty and severe, as I know him to be, as soon as he knew where his daughter was, he has come after her, and forced her to go with him. Luzy that moment calls for the people that waited on Laurette. He examines them, and asks if any of them had seen in her lodging a Peasant he describes to them. One of them actually remembers that, on the same day she went off, a man of that figure stepped up to the door of Laurette's coach and spoke to her for a moment.—Come quickly, cries Luzy, post horses to my chaise!

The second night, arriving within a few leagues of the village of Coulange, he puts one of his men in the dress of a Peasant, and sends him to get intelligence, while he tries to take some rest. There is no rest for a lover in his situation. He counted the minutes

from the departure of his messenger till his return.

Good news, sir, cries the servant entering almost out of breath, good news! Laurette is at Coulange with her father.—Ah, you restore me to life.—They talk of marrying her. Of marrying her! . . . I must see her.—You will find her in the vineyard: she works there all day long.—Good heaven, what cruelty! come, I will keep myself out of sight, and you in that disguise, will watch the time when she is alone. Let us not lose a moment: let us begone.

Luzy's messenger had told him the truth. An advantageous match had been proposed to Laurette in her own rank; and the Curate had sent to Basil to advise him to accept it.

Laurette all this while was working in the vineyard and thinking of Luzy. The Count comes up and perceives her at a distance. He advances with precaution; but seeing her alone, he springs over the hedge and runs to her with open arms. At the noise he makes among the leaves, she raises her head, and turning her eyes: good God! cries she . . . surprise and joy stopt her voice. Trembling she was in his arms before she could name him. Ah, Luzy, is it you? It is what I ask of heaven. I am innocent in your eyes: that is enough: I must suffer the rest. Farewell, Luzy, farewell forever! leave me. Pity Laurette, she don't blame you. You will

ever be dear to her. Leave thee ; cries he, pressing her to his bosom as if afraid to lose her again, O my Laurette, how can I live without thee ; how can I leave thee ? No power on earth shall separate us again !—There is a power on earth sacred to me : the will of my father. Ah, my friend, had you but known the grief we have given him ; good and tender hearted as you are, you would have given me back to his tears. To take me from him again or plunge a dagger in his heart would be the same thing to me. You know me too well to ask it of me ; you have too much humanity to desire it. Cease, Luzy to indulge a hope that is forever lost to me. Farewell. May heaven forgive my fault ! but O, my Luzy, it is hard for me to think it one. Farewell, I say : my father is a coming : it would be dreadful should he find us together. It is what I want, says Luzy : I wait for him.—Ah, you are going to renew my trouble !

At that very moment Basil arrives, and Luzy, going some steps to meet him, falls down at his feet.—Who are you ? what do you want, says Basil, at first surprised. But as soon as he had fixed his eyes on him : wretch ! cries he, begone : get out of my sight.—No : I die at your feet unless you hear me.—After having *dishonored the daughter* have you the impudence to *appear before her father* ?—I am criminal I confess, and I

have brought you a weapon to punish me : but if you will but hear me, I hope you will pity me. Ah, says Basil, looking at the sword, if I was as *base*, as *cruel* as you . . . . See, says he to his daughter, *what a mean and shameful thing vice is, when it makes A MAN fall down before his fellow mortal and bear his contempt !*—If I was only vicious, says Luzy, fired with indignation, instead of imploring you, I would bid you defiance. You ought to impute my humanity to the noblest and most honourable principles in human nature ; to *love*, to *virtue*, and the desire of *atoning for a fault*, perhaps excuseable, and which I should make very light of, were I, as you represent me, *void of humanity !* then, with all the eloquence of sentiment, he tried to justify himself, ascribing what he had done to the heat of youth and intoxication of passion.

The world is very happy, says Basil, that your passion was not that of money ! you would have been a robber, perhaps a murderer ! Luzy shuddered at this discourse.—And why not ? are you so mean as to think *innocence* and *honor* of less value than *life* or *riches* ? have you not taken advantage of the imbecility of this poor creature to rob her of that inestimable property ? and can you think you have done me who am her father a less injury than if you had *assassinated* me ? a robber and murderer is broke on the wheel, be-

excuse he takes our gold, which is but *trash* ;  
 and you who ravish from us our good name,  
 our innocence and peace of mind, jewels that  
 all the wealth of India could not purchase,  
 what is it you *deserve* ? you have not enriched  
 yourself : but you have made us poor in-  
 deed ! the world calls you *nobleman* : and  
 you believe the flattering speech. But only  
 look and see the *Ensigns of that Nobility*  
 in which you glory ! in the hour of distress,  
 when the most abject of men would have pi-  
 tied me, you come up to me in the guise of  
 friendship, *pretending sorrow* for my mis-  
 fortune, while you are saying in your heart :  
*there is a poor wretch who has no other conso-*  
*lation in the world but his daughter : it is all*  
*the comfort heaven has left him ; and to mor-*  
*row I mean to carry her off !* yes, barbarous  
 and hard hearted man, this was the language  
 of your soul ! and I too credulous admired  
 your disinterested friendship : I poured out  
 blessings on your head : I asked of heaven to  
 grant you all your wishes ; and all your  
 wishes tended to *corrupt my daughter* ! what  
 do I say, unhappy man ! I sent her after you.  
 It was indeed to return that gold with which  
 you thought to bribe her father : it seemed as  
 if heaven had advertised me that it was a pe-  
 nicious, traiterous gift : I resisted that moti-  
 on, I was willing to think you *compassionate*  
 and *generous* ; you was only *treacherous* and  
*unmerciful* ; and that hand that I would have

killed and bedewed with my tears *was lifted up to pierce my heart* ! look, says he, opening his bosom, what a man you have dishonored ! I have lost more blood in *defence of my country* than you have got in your veins ! and you, useless man, what are *your exploits* ? to *deprive* a poor father of *comfort* and *debauch his daughter* ! to imbitter all the days of her life and bring *his* grey hairs with sorrow to the grave ! There she stands that *poor victim* of your *seductions* ; there she stands who wets with tears the daily bread she eats. Brought up as she has been in the simplicity of an innocent and laborious life, she loved it ; she now detests it : you have made labour and poverty insupportable to her : she has lost her joy with her innocence ; nor can she look up without blushing. But what grieves me most of all, and what I *never can forgive you*, you have shut my daughter's heart against me ; you have *extinguish'd* in her soul the *sentiments of nature* ; you have made her father's company a torment to her ; perhaps, alas ! . . . I shudder at the thought . . . *perhaps she hates me* !

Ah, father ! cries Laurette, who till then stood in silent dejection : Ah, father ! that punishment is greater than I can bear ! I deserve every thing but the reproach of not *loving* you ; in saying this she falls down at his feet. Luzy falls down with her, and overcome with tenderness : my father, says he,

**forgive her ; forgive me !** And if the *rauisier* of Laurette is not unworthy of the name of her **HUSBAND**, here on my knees I beg it of you.

This humble confession would have softened a heart much harder than that of Basil. If there was says he to Luzy, any other means of repairing my honor and restoring you both to virtue and innocence ; I would refuse this : but as it is the *only* one, I accept of it ; and much more for your sake than my own : for I neither *wish* nor *want any thing of you* : I want to *live and die in my Vineyard !*

The love of Luzy and Laurette was consecrated at the Alter. Many said that he had degraded himself, and he confessed as much ; but it is not says he, in the sense they mean. It is in *committing the crime* that all the *dishonor* lies, and not in *repairing it*.

It was no easy matter to induce Basil to leave his humble dwelling. After trying every means to bring him to Paris, Madam de Luzy prevailed with her husband to purchase a small estate near Coulange where this worthy father went at her desire to pass the evening of his days.

Two souls formed for virtue were thus happy in being restored to it. This image of the heavenly joys, the concord of love and innocence left them nothing to wish but to

See the fruits of such a sweet union. Heaven listened to the voice of nature ; and Basil before he died had the pleasure of embracing his Grand children.

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**SIDNEY;**  
OR THE  
*Self-Murderer Reclaimed* ; ♥

==  
**A TRAGI-COMEDY.**  
==

FROM THE FRENCH OF

**GRESSET.**

—:~::~~:—

**DRAMATIC PERSONÆ.**

**SIDNEY.**—In love with Rosamond.

**LORD HAMILTON.** Sidney's friend.

**DUMONT.** Valet to Sidney.

**HENRY.** An old gardener.

**ROSAMOND.** In love with Sidney.

**MATTY.** A country girl and daughter to  
Henry.

**SCENE.** A retired country seat, in the  
neighbourhood of London.

THE following Piece was originally written in French heroic verse, as all their dramatic works are. It was acted on their Stage in 1745, with what success I know not. But I rather think it is more calculated for the Closet than the Stage, as having few characters and consequently little action in it. This defect seems to arise chiefly from the nature of the subject. The actions of a Hypochondriac passing in Solitude can admit of few witnesses.

The character of Dumont may be thought reprehensible by an English reader ; but this can only be suggested by the prejudice of education. In France and Germany a *Valst de Chambre* is treated as a humble companion in private ; whereas in England he is but a few removes from a slave. Is this a Satyre on our countrymen ? No : it is the highest encomium. Such is our innate love of liberty, that the moment we are deprived of it in the least degree, we feel emasculated and reduced to something below the rank of a rational being.

# SIDNEY;

O R

*THE SELF-MURDERER RECLAIMED.*



A C T 1.

SCENE 1.

DUMONT.

**O**N my conscience, the Poet, who first sung the praises of solitude, must have been a wretched animal. What a pitiful life is this for a person who has ever tasted the pleasures of a court ? since these three mortal days that I have lived, in this rural mansion on that melancholy with which my master regales himself, I feel myself three years older. Can he be in his right senses, this Mr. Sidney ? what the Devil ! a young man of fortune carested by all the fine ladies at court and on the eve of having a regiment, to eclipse himself all of a sudden in the meridian of life, to turn his back on the universe, and plant himself here in the woods like an owl ? could I but know the cause ? but I may as well talk to the pine trees as talk to him. During this live long month, he is silence in the abstract. Well, it don't signify, I must and will know why we have changed our plan of operations : it shan't be said we are come here to die of languor without knowing the reason.

O 2

Come . . . I was going to bring myself into a fine scrape :

*(running back from the door.)*

He had given me positive orders not to enter his apartment without being called. He has not brought so much as a footman with him. It seems in future, I am to do the duty of all other Domestics : a Valet de Chambre must be Cook and Butler and every thing else, what a purgatory of a life ! yet if one could find in these woods a human physiognomy, in short any piece of decent furniture to grace this hermitage, one might have a little patience ; it would keep one in countenance ! but nothing of the feminine gender exists here : its a perfect wilderness for a gentleman to live in. I have had a glimpse of a Matty, the Gardener's daughter ; she is handsome ; but she looks so silly and awkward . . . Ah, by Jupiter, here she comes : good morning, my pretty girl.

SCENE 2.

DUMONT, MATTY,

*making several courtesies*

*Dumont.* No ceremony ! come in . . . are you ashamed to be handsome ! what makes you blush ?

*Matty.* Sir . . . .

*Dumont.* Don't be afraid : where was you going !

*Matty.* Sir, I was looking for you !

*Dumont.* Oh ! faith, this is a different note : looking for me ? truly she an't so silly as I imagined.

*Matty.* You are our master ?

*Dumont.* Almost ; but let me hear : you may tell your story to me as to the best friend you have in the world.

*Matty.* I am come on a message, sir, for another person.

*Dumont.* Oh ! I want to see you on your own account.

*Matty.* A stranger lady, who seems to be in great trouble of mind, has been in our neighbourhood, I think these four years : she lives in a Castle hard by.

*Dumont.* Well go on : what is this strange lady's pleasure ?

*Matty.* Oh ! sir, if you only saw the lady once, I am sure you would oblige her : I don't know what favour she expects of you ; but I was there when she first heard of your being in this place, and I could see joy sparkle in her eyes. I should not have come here to day if she had not sent me to tell you that she desires to speak with you for a few moments ; and she thinks you too good to refuse her.

*Dumont.* Upon my honor, this is a good hint ! the world begins to turn upside down ; but its all for the better : liberty is the life of conversation. Well, the lady may come when she pleases. I shall be ready to wait

upon her ; and she has done very well to trust the management of her affair to you. What a pity such merit should be buried in obscurity ! could any one have more naturally assumed the ton and mysterious air of the profession, who had served twenty coquets and been initiated in all the arts of female policy ? but, my dear child, this is too old a part for you to act : your age requires one that would suit you better ; and instead of carrying messages for others, you ought to have no secrets but your own.

*Mat'y.* I don't understand you, sir.

*Dumont.* That may be ; but I can understand you perfectly well.

(*apart.*)

Upon my faith I would take her if I was at leisure.

As you have been so ingenious, child, I won't deceive you. The gentleman is within : you have been mistaken, I am only his deputy. But that's nothing, I will speak a good word for you ; and your affair shall be done. I can assure you for your encouragement, he is a mighty comforter of ladies in distress, and can perform wonderful cures when he has a mind to it.

*Matty.* But be sure not to speak a word of this to any body else. . . Somebody is coming. . . . Be still. Its my father.

*Dumont.* Oh, these plaguy fathers are every where present.

SCENE 3d.

DUMONT, HENRY, MATTY.

(*Henry carrying a packet of letters.*)

Ah, ah, sir, this is too great an honor for our daughter.

*Dumont.* Truly master Henry I think she is very handsome.

*Henry.* Poor child, she has got but time to say.

*Dumont.* Oh, she is young! time and good natural parts. . . . But what have you got there?

*Henry.* A packet I received from a courier at the gate.

*Dumont.* And what is become of him?

*Henry.* The devil has run away with him, for any thing I know, and won't return in less than three days.

*Dumont.* I think I hear my master stirring. . . . Yes, you may go home: here he comes.

Exit Henry and Matty.

SCENE 4.

SIDNEY, *reading some papers*, DUMONT.

*Dumont.* May I presume, sir, without in-  
croaching on your silence to present you with  
two words of interrogation. As I have some  
precautions to take if our meditations here  
are to be of any duration; I beg you would  
acquaint me quickly: for if we stay only four  
days longer, I mean to make my will and

prepare for another world. In short, sir, I swear to you, I can't endure to be buried here alive. When we are alone, we think too much : much thinking makes a man dull ; and to be plain with you, melancholy don't agree with my constitution. . .

*Sidney.* A table here quickly, with pen and ink.

*Dumont.* Well, but . . .

*Sidney.* ~~That!~~

Let a horse be got ready in a moment.

*Dumont.* Our stile is laconic. Exit.

SCENE 5.

SIDNEY *alone.*

Since I formed this resolution, I can feel some ease from that weight of grief that oppressed my spirit. There is no chain strong enough to confine an intrepid soul : the evils of life are a trifle when one can see the end of them.

*(after writing some lines.)*

O ! you whom I once adored, whose love, whose virtue, and whose graces ought to have been ever dear to me ! you whose life has been embittered by my inconstancy ; if you are yet alive my dear Rosamond, you will see how much I have suffered for my fault, when my friend, in whom I trust, has put you in possession of my fortune.

*(he continues writing.)*

## SCENE 6.

SIDNEY, DUMONT.

*Dumont.* My petition, sir, concerning our return, tho' God knows when it will be answered, has made me forget this packet . . .

{ *He puts the letters* }  
{ *on the table.* }

*Dumont apart.*

Without doubt he is sending a messenger to London, let us embrace this opportunity  
(*he takes a quill and makes it.*)

SIDNEY, *writing.*

What are you about ?

*Dumont.* Why, my dispatches, sir : *parbleu !* the least I can do is to let people know I am in this place. Do you imagine I han't got my friends and acquaintances too ? you have made me break through all the rules of good manners, leave London without bidding farewell, take up my lodging without telling where ; our club will take me for a fool : besides, sir, to leave good company in this manner is to be dead and buried in the midst of a man's life. It is true you have got some very agreeable neighbours ; some facetious squires and Fox hunters, some very entertaining justices of the peace who can tell you all the news of Europe from old Gazettes. These will be delicious company.

*Sidney.* Dont be discouraged : you'll see London to-morrow.

*Dumont.* You raise me to life again ; if you had not spoke this sweet word, I was as dead as Julius Cæsar.

*Sidney, (continuing to write.)*

It seems then you don't like the country we live in ?

*Dumont.* Why, sir, I love a country where I can see men. What the devil of a jargon is this ? you an't the same person I have known you : you did not bring me up for a Philosopher. Since our return from France where I first engaged to wait on you out of pure affection, I never had reason to regret my native country : I was as happy in London as in Paris : I was always in the beau monde, employed among the ladies : I carried your letters and was ever well received ; for the messenger of a favorite is always welcome : and I may venture to say I acted my part honourably : in a word, I lived like a gentleman ; but here I am rusted, and look like a Jack Ass. Upon my honour, sir, the best thing we can do is to return to court ; for that is our element : but as we are a going, what occasion is there for writing ?

*Sidney.* You are going ; I stay.

*Dumont.* What demon of melancholy possesses you ? what inspires you with this change of humor, this hatred of every thing, this strange project of pining yourself to

death? I could guess for a wager, the cause of your retreat. I could lay my life they have play'd you some scurvy trick; some lady, in spite of her vows of eternal constancy, has discarded you to make room for your successor. But pray, sir, what comfort is this to me? must I, who am in full peace and amity with all the sex, be metamorphos'd into a Bear, because your Dulcinea has left you?

*Sidney.* You will carry this letter to my Lord Hamilton.

*Dumont.* Why, sir, the packet I just now brought is from him; at least I imagine so by the address.

*Sidney, (in surprise.)*

How!—is it possible he should know of my being here?

{ *He reads one letter, and leaves*  
*the others unopened.* }

—He writes me that he is coming here; but I have some affairs that I could wish to finish in this solitude: you must make haste, and prevent his coming...

*Dumont.* And leave you to mope, and meditate here alone; to converse with the owls, the bats and the pine trees... But I have seen the time when you would read your letters.

*(Dumont reads the addresses.)*

I am much deceiv'd, sir, or this is a letter of importance ; it comes from Court.

*Sidney. (having read it)*

Yes : and I have got the Regiment.

*Dumont.* I am overjoyed !—come sir, I'll have your chair ready in a moment. We shall certainly go now ; you must return thanks . . . But what mystery is this ? Is it possible, that, after so many applications, so much attendance, you should obtain the object of your desires with such a stoical indifference ?

*Sidney. (still writing.)*

Are you ready to go ? I have done.

*Dumont.* Upon my honor, sir, I am confounded : this coldness, this insensibility of yours is incomprehensible : and, if I had not known you to be a gentleman of solid good sense ; to tell you plainly, I should be apt to suspect . . . excuse my freedom.—

*Sidney.* Alas ! my poor Dumont, I am but too wise.

*Dumont.* And to nourish the melancholy that preys upon your vitals, you are now entertaining your great friend. Lord Hamilton is only a philosopher. Instead of this epistle, which I dare say treats on some grave and gloomy subject ; why don't you scrawl a page or two of nonsense to those other friends of yours who are always brim-full of folly and good humor, and have not their brains

tainted with that plaguy maggot of eternal thinking ?

*Sidney.* I write only to him ; because I write on affairs of importance : the other friends you mention, the companions of my pleasures and idle hours, are not so near my heart : I trust in him I have most reason to esteem ; the man who thinks is the only solid friend.

*Dumont.* Well, if I must leave you here, I mean to leave you in good company. A lady in distress has been just now introduced to me, who being tired of the world, has taken sanctuary in these woods to evaporate her spleen. This smells strong of an adventure ; and she desires, I am told, to give you the history of her misfortunes ; besides her being in tears, they say she is exquisitely handsome. If this adventure should prove successful, I hope you will reserve her waiting woman for me ; you know, in such cases, the etiquette.

*Sidney.* Have done with your visions.

*Dumont.* Visions ! as I'm a christian they are good flesh and blood ; and such as you won't find every where. I have settled some preliminaries for us both ; and don't you go to expose yourself by affronting them : if it was only for a little pastime ; allow them to admire you.—Shall I go in your name, as honor requires, to tell them . . .



## SCENE 8.

DUMONT. HENRY.

DUMONT.

You must go to London to carry a letter.

*Henry.* Ay, two fir, if needful.

*Dumont.* I shall give it you presently. . . .  
He is either sick or out of his senses ; perhaps both : what mischief attends these happy men ? they have sea-room at will ; what the devil stops them ?

*Henry.* Hear me, Mr. Dumont, I am but an ignorant person : but seeing our master, and considering the thing in my own breast ; I do reckon, as how, I have found out the cause. As I lived with our defunct master, I have seen some company ; I have heard people talk in the world : now, you must know that all your great men are never merry and jovial like common folks : as they are always well and easy, their pleasure, as I take it, is worn thread-bare ; and they would require, do you see, some trouble, some hard labor to make them laugh heartily : commend me to an honest farmer to laugh with heart and good will !—but as I was a saying, with regard to the disorder of our master, I do suppose, as I said before, that I can come near to guess at it : because I have seen his father a going the same road ; and if this continues, Mr. Dumont, to speak it between you and me, I mortally dread that he'll come to a bad

end; and much were the more pity, that such a brave gentleman . . . So good a master . . . So wise . . .

*Dumont.* It were a great pity to be sure: but what was his father's disorder?

*Henry.* Nothing: the disorder that kills people here who are in good health.

*Dumont.* Explain yourself.

*Henry.* Ah! my faith, he that understands it may explain it. I don't know whether you have got the same customs in France that we have got here: but I have seen folks that nobody would take to be out of their head, who, without any cause; without any malady, have left the company at a broad-side, and slept fair and softly into the other world without witnesses, for fear of interruption. His deceas'd father, Lord have mercy upon us, was a man of gold, as mild as a lady, and as like his own child here as two eggs: well he came down to this castle of ours. In former times, he used to talk with me as with his own equal; for he was a good soul: now he neither spoke to me nor nobody else; but that was nothing; speech, you know, is free; he look'd fat and fair, like a man in good health: but behold, one morning he slept, and slept like a de'il; and so found that he sleeps to this good hour. They found on his table a kind of scrawl where they could make out that he had fallen asleep on purpose not

to awake any more: he was a man of a great head.

*Dumont.* He was a very great blockhead; and his son is like enough to publish a second volume of the same work.—But let me alone he is a coming.—Come get ready and return quickly:

SCENE 9.

SIDNEY. DUMONT.

*Sidney.* Are you ready?

*Dumont.* Yes: I am ready to stay:

*Sidney.* What!

*Dumont.* I have made my reflections—  
Besides that trouble of mind.—Some rumors too that are spread abroad concerning our retirement.—

*Sidney.* What? what do they say? who?

*Dumont.* I never mention names: but when people see you plung'd in this bottomless pit of melancholy; of a taste and genius so diametrically opposite to your character; they can't help thinking you have a quarrel with life: they say you are come here to bury yourself alive, and allow yourself to die by inches.

*Sidney.* What put that notion in your head?

*Dumont.* It is foolish, to be sure; but it is always good to be cautious: life is a commodity I set great store by; and I am choicer of it on your account, if you n't.

*Sidney.* Dumont then, it seems, is very well pleased with the world?

*Dumont.* Who? I sir? my plan, if heaven prospers me, is to live merrily all the days of my life: we live but once here; and as its my turn, I mean to keep my hand in as long as I am able. I should have been a hero but for the love of life: but the folks of our family are wonderfully fond of this lower world. There is no disputing of tastes: but my father and grand father, and all our ancestors ever since the flood, as far as I can learn, have been of my system; and my future children, if I have any, let them be rich or poor, will be of the same principles, or they are none of my offspring. You great men have the honor of a death that is published in the Gazette, and makes, like a squib, a great noise in the world; but we poor folks have nothing but a spunk of breath. We have some trouble in the world to be sure; but if we are wretched to day, we may be happy to-morrow: and a merry day is always worth living for.

*Sidney.* Leave off your preaching and carry my letter.

*Dumont.* I am sorry to tell you, sir, that I can't.

*Sidney.* I am tired of your small talk: when I speak I mean to be obeyed; and when a Valet de Chambre forgets himself, I can dismiss him.

*Dumont.* See what it is to be a man of sentiment! this is the reward of loving peo\*

ple too much. Is it for my pleasure? It makes me mad to think of it; is it for my pleasure to stay here? If my attachment . . .

*Sidney.* Don't plague me any longer: prepare for your journey, or else . . .

*(they hear the crack of a whip.)*

*Dumont.* There comes our courier.

*(Henry appears.)*

*Sidney.* Who?

*Dumont.* It is my Valet de Chambre.

SCENE 10.

SIDNEY. HENRY. DUMONT.

*Sidney.* You rogue, and who is the master?

*Dumont.* Sir, I know that you ought to be; but in short there are some circumstances in life . . . You may beat me, you may kill me; but I shan't stir a step: I can't leave you in the condition you are in; and the more you urge me, the more my fears increase.

*Sidney.* Henry you must go to London, and carry this packet to my Lord Hamilton. As for you Mr. Dumont, you may make up your accounts and begone as soon as you please.

*exit.*

*Dumont.* Now I am in my glory: you dismiss me, so much the better; then I am my own master: and my orders are to stay in this place . . .

He won't have the heart to part with me; he loves me, and I mean to worm him of this maggot: these masters however, I think,

are very lucky that we have sometimes got a little common sense when they have lost their own.

## A C T 2.

## SCENE 1.

HAMILTON. DUMONT.

*Dumont.* You are come sir, in lucky time to relieve our distress : blessed forever be the hour that brought you here. Go and see my poor master, and apply something to his sickly brain. Perhaps you may find out from what strange motives he condemns himself to this solitude ; and whether he means in spite of me to continue in it. He has just been writing to you ; and no doubt you have met his express on the road.

*Hamilton.* No, but as I crossed the avenue, I observed two women, one of which I think is no stranger to me ; but as I drove hard I could not see them plainly : do you know who they are ? or is it a secret.

*Dumont.* Why, sir, I think I can guess pretty near. There must be a great scarcity of men in this country : for as soon as it was known that my master was settled here, we had a female embassy, and without the usual ceremonies ; but as he has no more feeling than a marble statue, he bluntly refused them an audience. Now, sir, as I am naturally tender hearted and not accustomed to such cruelty, I mean to negotiate with them in person, and receive them on my own ac-

count ; and if you have any inclination that way.——

*Hamilton* Go and learn their names and hear what they have got to say.——But does he know I am here ?

*Dumont.* Yes, I have sent to acquaint him of your arrival ; he is hard by at his meditations. You have seen him totally change his genius and manners when in London : you have seen him shun the company of his most intimate friends, and even his favorite pleasures ; but that is nothing to what he is now.

*Hamilton.* What can ail him ? what can be the cause ?

*Dumont.* It were happy for him if he had any ail : but upon my salvation, I believe he is grieved without any cause.

*Hamilton.* But does he alledge any ostensible cause ?

*Dumont.* Good now ! do you imagine he ever opens his lips ? that's his folly : it is the demon of silence that possesses him. What he orders this moment he forgets the next. He had dismissed me notwithstanding our friendship ; and you must think I took it very much to heart : but a few moments after, I wait upon him as usual and he dines without mentioning any thing of our quarrel. This is what grieves me. If he was only brutal and extravagant I should impute it to some bodily indisposition ; and to be plain with you, I should be glad for his own sake that he was

only fairly out of his senses : the knowledge of the disease might point out the remedy. But, by a strange fatality, he is rational in his folly, cool and deliberate in his frenzy ; in a word, he is a fool from a superfluity of wisdom ; a philosophical mad-man ; and as insensible to all the pleasures of this world as if he was already in the Elysian fields. In former times he would not have obtained a regiment but with transports of joy : and can you believe that he received the news without the least emotion ? I am told that some years ago he had a father who, like him, covering his melancholy or rather his madness under a stoical guise, took an opportunity one morning to give his friends the slip and smuggle himself out of the world. It's a hereditary maggot it seems that runs in the blood, and I am sorry for it. In short, sir, unless you take some course with him he is a dead man. For heavens sake go and see him, and examine him : he loves you and places entire confidence in you ; and your advice, if any can, may make some impression on him : I shall leave you together.—But here he comes himself.

## SCENE 2.

SIDNEY. HAMILTON.

*Hamilton.* Well, my friend, I meant to be the first to congratulate you on your promotion : I would not trust the dull messengers of pen and ink, but am come in person

to convince you how sensible I am of every thing that can contribute to your happiness : but I am surprised, on this genial day that calls for mirth and festivity, to see a cloud hanging on your brow in the bright sun-shine of your sovereign's favor.

*Sidney.* I must ingenuously confess, with a freedom that friendship authorises, that I could have wished to see you here some days later : I had just sent you an express on an affair that admits of no delay ; and if you would consult my real interest . . .

*Hamilton.* What! would you have me to leave you alone in this wilderness ? I don't comprehend your meaning : the character you bear requires your immediate presence at court : you certainly can't think of staying here ?

*Sidney.* As I can keep no secrets from my friend, I freely own that, disgusted with the world, tired of its noise, weary of the court, and sick of the town ; I can take no comfort but in this peaceful retreat.

*Hamilton.* But in short, sir, in your present character as an officer of the army, this project of retreat must be look'd upon as very absurd ; and however rational your conduct may be in itself, you will certainly make yourself ridiculous in the eyes of the world. We should never rashly entertain the public with these spectacles of humor, which we

seldom or ever support. Every thing here is in a perpetual flux ; every thing dies, favor, fortune, and even friendship itself ; and a mal-content is soon forgotten : a man leaves the world in a pet, he grows dull, he suffers, he dissembles, he returns again ; but his place is taken up, and nobody takes any notice of him, unless it be to laugh at his folly.—But is there no other way to escape the rascality of mankind ? to shun the croud must one renounce all human society and bury himself alive ? the man of sense and spirit whose birth, or rank attaches him to the world, without deserting his post, changing his station, can live retired in the midst of a court ; can, without noise, shake off the chain of popular slavery and enjoy himself and his friend. This is the plan that sound reason adopts. But tell me the real truth : what can be your motive ? what is it you complain of ?

*Sidney.* I have no complaint, nor any reason to complain.

*Hamilton.* Are you then a misanthrope ? Oh ! my friend, shun that gloomy, that detestable character : whatever men may be, let us remember they are our companions in life ; our fellow-passengers to the vast ocean of eternity. The insociable man is ever miserable. The great art of life is to conform ourselves, without servility to the company we keep ; to the manners of the place and age we live in.

*Sidney.* No, Hamilton, I am no misanthrope : I am none of your over-righteous spirits, the declared enemies of their contemporaries, who, finding neither truth, reason or honesty in the world, live and die the tyrants of their species. Mankind are not deserving of such contempt : there are bad men in the world to be sure ; but in all the various nations where curiosity has led my youthful steps, I have found virtues, I have found wisdom, I have found reason to love humanity, and to reverence the bonds of society : I have never tasted that diabolical pleasure of offending, grieving and hating my fellow creatures.

*Hamilton.* What makes you shun them then with such obstinacy ?

*Sidney.* What would you have done in my place ? condemn'd as I am to all devouring melancholy, crush'd under a load of insupportable grief, reduced to the frightful state of being a burthen to myself : I would gladly save my fellow creatures the painful sight of such a shocking object. Insensible to those pleasures I once idolized ; I find them all one universal blank. The uniformity of the scenes of life can never rouse a soul that's plung'd in such a lethargy : the whole circle of human intrigues and pursuits can only bring about the same uninterested objects. In the brilliant sphere I have so long moved in, I have seen and tast-

ed again and again all that can be seen or enjoy'd ; and there is nothing new to me under the sun : I have acted my part in the farce of life on this frivolous stage : and if every one would thus make his exit, it were a happy reformation ; the world would not be so crowded and pestered with so many eternal veterans of folly.

*Hamilton.* O, my dear friend, what ignis fatuus, in reasons garb, bewilders you, and prompts you thus to plead a cause so desperate ? if you have tasted all the good things of this life : if you know them perfectly ; heaven then has placed happiness within your reach ; it is your business to chuse those that are genuine, and reject such as are adulterated. But what is the happiness you so much regret ? you say you have known all the pleasures of the world, and they are now grown insipid. What ! are there no pleasures then superior to that intoxication in which our giddy and unthinking youth is plung'd ? does this hurricane of foolish passions, this scene of riot, error and delusion set bounds to the sphere of human happiness ? let us open our eyes, my friend, and reason will present us with a brighter scene ; a far more noble and more ample field of action.—Believe me Sidney, we have not yet begun to live : to employ our time, our talents, our virtue in the service of mankind ; to aggrandize our country ; to improve our

rational faculties, and leave instructive lessons to posterity ; this is life : these are pleasures worthy the ambition of an immortal spirit ; pleasures ever new and ever young : nourish'd by these the soul shall flourish in immortal youth when this bright sun and every orb perhaps is blotted out.—But you are deaf:—

*Sidney.* I hear the voice of reason speaking from your lips, and I approve it too ; but what can reason do oppos'd to sentiment ? I wish you success in that glorious race where reason tells me I should follow you ; but as for me all hope of life is lost. In vain would you set before me the picture of a new life, a fresh and untasted happiness : our happiness depends upon the inward feelings of the soul ; and here I am a wretched hopeless beggar : you might as well extol the charms of beauty to a eunuch : void of all sentiment, and dead to every pleasure, my broken heart is proof against enjoyment.

*Hamilton.* You wrong yourself, Sidney : this poverty, this dejection, this impotence of mind is disgraceful to humanity. Were you to shun the world and all its noise ; the man who thinks and reasons is happy in himself : tired and disgusted with every thing around him, he still possesses the independent pleasure of self enjoyment. The grand secret is to learn to live happy in retirement,

happy to converse with our own thoughts and gain the approbation of our own mind. I am far from advising a total retirement. I think it the wisest course to divide our time between solitude and society : the hours passed in private will give wings to desire, and make us long for the company of the world : most of our pleasures require some intervals of rest ; absence and abstinence whet the appetite, and give a finer edge to every sentiment ; and I am apt to think that the most poignant delights we feel are such as are seasoned, tho' imperceptibly, with a little tincture of pain. You yourself are a striking example of this truth : all your misfortunes spring from a lassitude and abuse of happiness. Don't repeat to me, that you can't overcome these gloomy sentiments : a man is what he ardently wishes to be ; and as far as heaven has made him master of his own heart, he is the maker of his own fortune : nothing in this world can elevate or depress him without his own consent.

But open your mind to me without reserve : has not your expensive way of living occasioned some disorder in the state of your finances ? if that is the case, it is easily repaired ; my fortune is at your service.

*Sidney.* My dear Hamilton, I am fully sensible of your generous and disinterested friendship : but my affairs are in no disorder : trouble don't arise from that quarter ; and

You shall see before many days that I was sufficiently independent of the world.

*Hamilton.* You grieve me to the heart. This ambiguous talk.—

*Sidney.* Perhaps your good advice and this solitude may cure me of all my troubles ; but I have previously some affairs to settle which will require your presence in London : my letter will inform you what I expect from your friendship ; and my happiness will depend on your diligence : in the mean time, till I have an opportunity of thanking his majesty in person, you'll be pleased to excuse my attendance at court on account of my being valetudinary : when you have done me this service, I shall expect you here. Leave me *Hamilton*, if you love your unhappy friend.

*exit.*

### SCENE 3.

*HAMILTON, alone.*

This mysterious ton, this strange conduct of his is more than sufficient to convince me of his madness. He is surely hatching some bloody design : his tranquillity don't seem natural.—

### SCENE 4.

*HAMILTON. HENRY.*

*Henry.* I learnt your name, sir, at the next stage yonder, I did not think it worth while to go any farther. Our master sent me with a letter to you ; but as you are here, here is your letter too.

*Hamilton.* Give it me ; it is very well : you may go and tell your master that I have got it.

SCENE 5.

*HAMILTON. alone*

What can he have wrote me ?

*(he reads,)*

My dear Friend,

I send you by this bearer, a long and everlasting farewell. You know how much I adored Rosamond, and what ungrateful returns I made to her virtuous love. I am ignorant of her fate ; but if heaven has preserved her alive, this deed will enable you to put her in possession of my estate, which I can safely trust in your hands. If her death is certain, you'll be pleased to accept it as a legacy from your unhappy friend.

Shed no superfluous tears on my account : I was weary of life, and I have broke my chain : before you read this I shall be in another world.

*SIDNEY.*

What frenzy ! what madness possesses him ? let us prevent his rage.

SCENE 6.

*SIDNEY, entering with wildness in his looks.*

*Hamilton.* *(Hamilton after embracing him in silence)*

Take back this bloody deed ! It makes me tremble. You are a deceiver.

*(he returns his letter.)*

*Sidney.* What can you expect from such a

ghost as I? since you know all, pity a poor wretch.—My execrable being is a weight that overwhelms me: you can't conceive the half of what I suffer. It is not only insensibility, and disrelish of the world; but I am weary of myself; I hate my own existence. This fatal sentiment, exclusive of all others, has taken possession of my inmost soul: my wounded heart, my restive jaded senses, my unhappy reason, have all conspired against me; all, all are mutinous and compel me to break my prison.—Must I ignobly wait the slow approaches of old age, to become an insipid, an impotent skeleton? chained to the eternal contemplation of unfavoury truths; while my poor heart overflows with the bitter sentiment of having once existed? No: it belongs to the stupid and plebian herd to bow their necks to the yoke; to crouch and grow hoary under the weight of their chain: *but you must allow, and reason will grant; that when evils are incurable; it is time to put an end to them.*

*Hamilton.* Alas! my friend, to what a fatal precipice has your infatuation led you?—but stop rash man!—stop, and contemplate for a moment, the dreadful gulf that yawns below! listen, once more to the voice of reason; before it be too late! know then, that *heaven opposes a sacred barrier to your rash attempt.* Consider you are not your own; you are a part of society: your time; yo

*fortune, your life belongs to your country ! the days of a man of honour, when called to the cabinet or to the field are the real property, the patrimony of his fellow citizens. Come then, my friend, and fill that office to which you are now promoted. Your soul, when employ'd will receive a new existence ; you will presently see a new creation—But, alas ! you seem plung'd in a lethargy that fills me with terror. What ! without dreading the horror of the passage, are you then resolv'd in cool blood, to follow the steps of those heroic madmen.—*

*Sidney.* There is no heroism in it : I am unhappy here, and I long for a change ; this is all. I have no ambition to be inrolled in the tablet of fame, or even to obtain a funeral oration ; and I'm surpris'd that people in some places should extol an action so very natural. Besides what am I in the world ? a single drop in the midst of the ocean whose presence or absence is equally imperceptible : *my death can do no hurt to society ; every thing will go on just as it did before I was born : few individuals are of consequence enough to be miss'd out of the world.*

*Hamilton.* Go on, cruel man, to spin reasons out of your distracted brain. But has not friendship power enough to make life desirable ?

*Sidney.* Alas ! in my present situation, I am only a burden to friendship ; and all I can

desire is that my friends would forget that ever such a wretch existed.

*Hamilton.* You wrong me, Sidney, when you forget that I suffer with you, and must bear a part in all your pains: I pardon your weakness.—But can you forget *Rosamond*, whom you so much adored? has she no interest in your life?—are these the councils that love inspires?—why don't you endeavour to find her out? I am persuaded she is alive; and I make no doubt but you'll have the pleasure of seeing her again.

*Sidney.* Ah, my friend, mention not that unhappy passion: my wrongs to *Rosamond* are of such a nature that, could I see her again, I am unworthy of her; the last sighs of a broken heart is an offering that love would never accept. You, who know all my foibles, was justly surpris'd that I should abandon a lover so tender: but I was infatuated; I was vicious, and unworthy to possess a heart like hers, formed for love and virtue. Promising her my hand, I gained her affections; but I was only a deceiver: tired of her severity, tired of her virtue, I left her in tears, I was a traitor to love! unworthy of her tears, I gave a loose reign to every irregular passion; I loved promiscuously without esteem, joyless in the arms of pleasure; and wandering far from my native shore, I forgot *Rosamond*, who had retired from the world to mourn my treachery. Alas! my friend, ~~pa~~

haps I have been the cause of her death. Since I have grown weary of the world, contemplating the end of my life and sufferings, I have thought to make her some reparation, as you well know, by putting her in possession of my fortune. I have sought her in London and its environs, I have sought her every where ; but my researches have been to no purpose.

*Hamilton.* Trust the care of finding her to me.

*Sidney.* No : if it was in my power, I would not see her again : my troubled faculties, my expiring senses, all conspires to separate me from her : my soul, in a dark eclipse, can see nothing but the gloomy prospect of approaching death ! when I wanted to know her fate, and the place of her retreat, it was to make her happy ; at least after my death ; I never meant to present her with a heart mortally wounded.

*Hamilton.* She will forget your wrongs, when she sees your repentance : love pardons every thing. Desist from your cruel attempt ; at least defer it, and ease the heart, the bleeding heart of your friend. Your soul was always form'd for wisdom, and you will hear its voice : you will overcome your troubles : I only ask a short respite ; will you promise it me ? my dear Sidney, I speak.

*Sidney.* I am ashamed of myself. Leave a poor wretch who loves and fears you,

(*Dumont appears.*)

I want to retire a little . . . I promise you, my friend, to return to you in a short time.

*Hamilton.* No, I shall go with you.

SCENE 7.

HAMILTON, DUMONT.

DUMONT. *Stopping Hamilton.*

Sir, a word of consequence with you.

*Hamilton.* Make haste ; for I'm afraid of every thing.

*Dumont.* What! does his madness . . .

*Hamilton.* He wants to make an end of himself : I must watch his steps and guard him from - - -

*Dumont.* Oh! I an't afraid of him : I have seized his pistols ; his arsenal is empty ; I have taken possession of every mortal weapon : you may safely trust his life to me : if he sees you observe him too narrowly he may possibly - - -

*Hamilton.* Go then, don't lose sight of him ; and see if I may come in.

*Dumont, returning abruptly,*

Apropos, this unknown lady . . . . . But, upon my conscience, sir, this whim of dying must be discarded ; it makes me tremble when I think of it. One of the female pilgrims too is tainted with this caprice : I don't know the cause of her vapours ; but you will find it out. I have been successful in reconnoitering the enemy ; and my master's re-

formation is infallible. The lady says she knows you, and wants to speak with you in private ; and, by the holy virgin, she has charms enough to bring the defunct to life again ; her shape, her gait, her eyes ; she moves, she talks, she looks so heavenly sweet ! . . . You shall see : somebody is a coming, I believe . . . By heavens it is she ! —I must run to my watch-tower to stand centry.

## SCENE 8.

ROSAMOND. HAMILTON.

*Hamilton.* Ah ! Rosamond is it you ? what a happy moment ! thank heaven for this meeting !

*Rosamond.* Alas ! my lord, these transports suit but ill with a poor creature like me, ready to end my wretched life and sufferings. After the step I have taken, I scarce dare to look you in the face. In more happy times, I should have been confident of your esteem ; but to one in misfortune every thing passes for a crime ; no doubt you blame me.

*Hamilton.* No, I wish you joy : this happy day was not made for tears ; it is sacred to love !

*Rosamond.* Oh ! heavens support me ! I shall faint away . . . .

*Hamilton.* Sidney is penitent . . . .

*Rosamond.* Am I awake ? or is it a golden dream that plays before my deluded fancy ? can it be that Sidney thinks of me ?

*Hamilton.* He is worthy of you ; and you are come to be his physician ; to make him happy for life.

*Rosalmond.* Oh ! Hamilton, if that were possible, you might wish me joy indeed : for my days hitherto have been but like the shadow of death ; but perhaps you flatter me, you sport with my too credulous heart.

*Hamilton.* No, you may believe your heart ; Sidney adores you ! but what lucky chance brought you to these parts ?

*Rosalmond.* I need not blush in the presence of such a friend ; you know my heart, and will do me justice. I confess I loved him, tho' without hopes : it was a comfort his inconstancy could not deprive me of ; and if I am now alive, it is through the strength of that cordial. About the time that Sidney left me, to fill up the measure of my misfortunes, I lost an indulgent mother ; and to conceal myself and my griefs from the world, I came to settle and bury myself with a relation, a lady who lives in this neighbourhood. But alas ! when I thought to leave my sorrows behind ; love found me out in this solitude which borders on Sidney's estate, and, by a soft but irresistible power, led me incessantly to wander and meditate in these woods. Every thing there spoke of him : the birds, as they sung, seemed to repeat his name : and every thing I saw or heard presented his dear image to my ima-

gination: I enjoyed the whole universe in this wilderness. I have many a time thought of removing into other parts; but a secret charm detain'd me. After passing four years in this retirement, you can't imagine what a flutter my spirits were in when I heard of his coming here. I meant to see him once more, and give him the last farewell of a lover. How I should have borne it, had he still been false, I won't pretend to say. But what makes Sidney so long invisible? if you please to show me the way; I should be glad to see him.

*Hamilton.* I would beg your patience for a moment: I entertain the most sanguine hopes; but I must first prepare your lover for the unexpected charm of this happy meeting: Sidney is in solitude, in grief, I had almost said in despair. . . : All I can tell you at present is that he is faithful; love will do the rest. I am sorry to retard your happiness; but before I pretend to introduce you I must first see him.

*Rosalind.* These delays fill me with fear and anxiety - - It is all a delusion—Sidney thinks not of me!

*Hamilton.* It is no delusion: was I but at liberty to tell you what he has done for you - - But I must retire and hasten the happy moment we all so ardently desire.

*Rosalind.* I trust the happiness of my life

in your hands, leaving you to think what my poor heart feels. *exit.*

## A C T 3.

## SCENE 1.

SIDNEY, *alone.*

It is done ! all is now over with me ! this fatal cup, which I have boldly taken, gently and gradually locking up my senses, will soon bring on the last and mortal sleep of nature ! no regret of the *past*, hangs on my troubled reason ; nor fear of *future ills* ! is the slave to blame who breaks his prison ? the judge, who waits me on the other side of this long, darksome night, is the friend and father of the universe : full of his bounty, I can lay me down ; my immortal spirit will securely drop and find repose in his paternal bosom.

## SCENE 2.

SIDNEY. HAMILTON,.

*Hamilton.* Alas, my dear Sidney, how insensible are you of the tender feelings of a friend ! this long hour I have been impatiently waiting to see you and bring you some comfort, but in vain ; all this time, you have been inaccessible : I am glad however to see you at last ; and I hope reason will resume her wonted prerogative.

*Sidney.* Yes my friend, and I am come to embrace you for the last time.

*Hamilton.* What shocking language ! are you then relapsed into that fatal delirium ?

*Sidney.* My last will and desires are written on your heart in legible characters ; and if Rosamond is numbered with the dead ---

*Hamilton.* No : she lives to make you happy. But Sidney, I am going to catechize you like a school-boy : I am going to ask you a question which I conjure you to answer me in the name of friendship : Was Rosamond now to appear before your eyes, in that same heavenly form you once beheld her, attended by these winning and attractive graces that waited on her steps in those happy moments when first you courted her and called on heaven to witness your sincerity ; was Rosamond, I say this moment to appear before your eyes, in all the eloquence of tears, pleading the just performance of your vows ; would you deny her suit ? could you resist the love of life ?

*Sidney.* I should give thanks to heaven for preserving her : you know my intention if I had found her : I should recommend her to your care ; but I should not live a day nor an hour the longer.

*Hamilton.* Since friendship begs, and pleads in vain ; love must command : let Rosamond appear.

### SCENE 3.

ROSAMOND ENTERS.

*Sidney, (in terror and surprise)*

Rosamond ! : .. Can I trust my senses ? or

is it all enchantment? are you Rosamond?  
and in this dismal place?

SCENE 3.

ROSAMOND.

Yes, I am Rosamond, who, in spite of my sufferings, have never been able to hate you; and I am come to taste the first fruits of your repentance: your heart belongs to me since it is virtuous. . . But what do I see? is this the effect of my presence?—Hamilton, I am deceived: this ominous silence. . .

*Sidney.* Confounded at the sorrows you must have felt on my account, what can I answer, when every thing condemns me? you are pleased to forget my folly and madness; but how can I forgive myself that cruel injustice? I ought calmly to submit to the stroke of fate; for I was unworthy of the happiness of being yours!

*Rosamond.* I have wept over your errors: I have pitied your weakness; but my misfortunes never altered my affection.

*Sidney.* Ah! weep no more, my dearest Rosamond; weep no more for me! it is your happiness that heaven gave up to those wild passions: the baleful influence of my inauspicious stars would have darkened the fairest and brightest days of your life: my gloomy character must have made you unhappy!

*Rosamond.* Alas! how dare you entertain a thought so false and so absurd! in that same peaceful dwelling where mutual love

keeps house ; be it in a cottage or a palace, believe me, Sidney, misery can find no harbour there ! I could have felt your griefs without being infected by them : I should have seen them only to comfort you ; and if my unwaried care, and most cordial affection had failed to cure you of your melancholy, I should have shared in it : bidding adieu to all the idle amusements of the world, I should have retired with you to a solitude like this : Rosamond with you could never be unhappy.

*Sidney.* Alas ! you know not half the extent ; you have not sounded the depth of my frightful destiny ! insensible to every pleasure, in the midst of my days, it has been my unhappy fate to hate the light of the sun ; and with *these hands to extinguish the lamp of life !*

*Rosamond.* Oh ! cruel man ! what fury could inspire you with a resolution that makes love and nature tremble ?—but, alas, you are a stranger to love : Ah ! Sidney ! Sidney ! if you persist in this resolution, you are a poor equivocating dissembler : you never would have hated life ; if you had loved me. The very image of our mutual happiness, offering itself to your fancy, would in a moment have roused you from this mortal lethargy. Believe me, Sidney, the union of two virtuous souls formed for love and for each other, has a charm powerful enough

to smoothe the rugged paths of life, and calm the rage of every boisterous passion. .

*Sidney.* Hark ! an angel speaks, and sets before me all the joys of paradise ! I feel a veil just falling from my eyes ! . . . All was in a dark eclipse : and now the sun breaks out and shines in all its glory !—but in a moment chaos returns and all is plung'd again in the dark womb of uncreated night ?—I'm on the rack—tortured between the sweets of love and something worse than annihilation !—on the one hand I see Rosamond—on the other . . . Oh, fatal cup !—unhappy wretch ! what have I done ?—fly hence nor dare to cast a look behind.

*Rosamond.* There is the reward of my love ! Hamilton, you deceived me and sported with my weakness.

*Sidney (kneeling before Rosamond as she attempts to go out.)* No : if he has sworn that I am a true penitent, and painted to you the transports of an immortal love ; he has not deceived you, my dearest Rosamond ! here, on my knees, I detest the follies of my life, and every moment that kept me from you. If I have been a criminal, you are amply revenged ; love has only waited for this moment to punish me.

*Rosamond.* Oh ! Sidney, what strange infatuation !

*Sidney.* I speak a sad and melancholy truth : pity my unhappy fate : in the arms

of pleasure, you see me surrounded by despair ! in vain would love light up his nuptial torch to cheer a heart that's doom'd to endless horror !—Oh ! Rosamond, had I but seen you a few moments sooner !—but alas ! some fury escap'd from her infernal prison has bewitched me, and hurried me headlong down to swift perdition !

*Rosamond.* Ah let us not torment ourselves by brooding over evils that are past : my heart forgets that ever you offended ; and you are the same to me as in those happy days when love and honour were about to join our hands : but why will you alarm me a fresh ? what mean these tears ?

*Sidney.* Vain felicity, poisoned by despair ! forget a wretch unworthy of your tears ! I have seen you too late, my dear Rosamond ; and now we must part forever ! my last sands run apace ; and I am now launching, not without horror, into that boundless ocean from whence no traveller returns : this night will close my eyes in the sleep of death ! weep not for me ; for I am a wretch whom heaven and earth condemns !

{ *Giving Rosamond the letter he  
had written to Hamilton.*

*Rosamond.* Ah, Sidney if you are yet within the reach of human feelings ; pity a heart that bleeds for you : forbear the rash attempt.

*Sidney.* It is too late, the crime is consummated : all remedy is lost ; all grief is impotent ! an invincible poison has passed thro' every vein.

*Rosamond.* Barbarous man !

*Hamilton.* Unhappy wretch.

*Rosamond.* We must try to save him : perhaps some antidote may yet be found.

*Hamilton.* Every thing possible shall be done : you may trust me. I am in haste : don't leave him. *(he goes out.)*

*Sidney.* Vain hopes !

SCENE 4.

SIDNEY. ROSAMOND.

*Rosamond.* Cruel man was it thus you loved me ?

*Sidney.* O, Rosamond, could you doubt of my love ; that doubt would make the sting of death more terrible !

Having sought you through the world in vain, I despised a life that was no longer yours : that disappointment sounded in my ears like the sentence of death ; and like a discontented criminal, I audaciously prevented the stroke of justice. Had I possessed that resignation of spirit which is the basis of true heroism ; I had now beheld a new creation arise, embellished by your charms : but truth has only drawn aside the veil to show me all the horror of the tomb ! submissive to the author of my being, I ought in humble adoration to have waited his sovereign will ar-

pleasure : in preserving your life, he meant my happiness ; and, as *I deserted my post*, he has justly made you the instrument of my punishment !

## SCENE 5.

HAMILTON. SIDNEY. ROSAMOND. DUMONT.

*Hamilton (to Dumont.)* Why don't you obey me ?

*Sidney.* No : my death is too certain.

*Dumont.* Ah, you begin to be sorry for yourself ? I'm glad to hear it : I'll undertake to cure him . . . .

*Sidney.* Put out that fool.

*Dumont.* You are very lucky that instead of being a fool, I had wit enough for us both. I watched you narrowly, from a dark corner where I lay concealed ; I saw you make some preparations I did not like : you being buried in thought and regardless of what passed around you stepped into your closet ; I seized that moment and changed the fatal liquor ; and I'll answer for it you shant die of this disorder.

*Rosamond.* You restore me to life.

*Hamilton.* Oh, happy turn !

*Sidney.* Scarce can I believe . . . Rosamond . . . Hamilton . . . and you whose happy zeal has saved me from this precipice, how shall I reward . . .

*Dumont.* Live, and I am paid : the folks of my country do every thing out of friendship : we look for no other return ; the

pleasure of doing a good action is an ample reward.

*Sidney.* O you whose virtue love and truth have raised me from the dead, my dear Rosamond, come to my arms and compleat the miracle ; be you the partner of my life and fortunes : it is to you I owe my all ; and if I wish to live it is to make you happy.

*Dumont.* I told you so : it would come to this at last. Melancholy ! hatred of life ! is all stark nonsense. In spite of all the jargon of philosophy, in spite of all the vapors in the world, commend me to life.

EXUNT OMNES.

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THE  
*SAMNITE MARRIAGES:*  
AN ANCIENT  
*ANECDOTE.*

From the French of MARMONTELL.

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WHERE are our fathers, O Warriors !  
the Chiefs of the times of old ? they are set  
like stars that have shone ; we only hear the  
sound of their praise. But they were re-  
nowned in their day, and the terror of other  
times.

Thus shall we pass, O Warriors, in the  
day of our fall. Then let us be renowned  
while we may ; and leave our fame behind  
us ; like the last beam of the sun, when he  
hides his red head in the west.

OSSIAN.

*THE Samnites were a people in Italy, whose territories were situated about one hundred miles east of the city of Rome ; and justly accounted the most warlike nation in Italy. They were defeated under Camillus with the loss of thirty thousand men. They however made several vigorous efforts afterwards to regain their importance and independence ; particularly after Pyrrhus King of Epirus, who had been called to head the Italian States against the Romans, had been defeated and obliged to abandon his allies. Soon after this period these brave people were entirely conquered and forced to submit to the Roman yoke.*

# *The Samnite Marriages.*

AN ANCIENT ANECDOTE.

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**E**VERY legislator, who means to reform mankind, would do well to begin by inlisting the female sex in the service of the laws ; by placing virtue and glory under the guardianship of beauty, under the banner of love : without this precaution, his labour will be in vain.

Such was the policy of the Samnites, that warlike nation that once gave law to Rome, and was for many years her rival. What was it that made a Samnite a warrior, a patriot, a man of intrepid virtue ? it was the care they took to appropriate to these qualities the worthiest prize of love.

The nuptial ceremony was annually celebrated in a large field set apart for military exercise. All the youth capable of giving citizens to the state were assembled on the solemn occasion. There the young men chose their spouses according to the rank their virtues and military achievements had given them in the annals of their country. What triumph must this have been to the young ladies who had the honour to be chosen by the conquerors ! what force and energy must love and ambition, those two great springs

of human action, have given to virtues on which their whole success depended ! all expected this annual ceremony with a tremulous impatience. Till then the young men and maidens met but seldom, except in the temple under the eye of the fathers and mothers with a modesty equally inviolable to both sexes. It is true, this severe restraint could not prevent their desires : the eye and the heart would make a choice ; but the young people were under the most sacred ties of duty and religion, not to communicate their inclination to any but to the authors of their lives : the divulging of such a secret was the disgrace of a family. This intimate confidence of a favourite and ruling passion, this tender effusion of their desires and aversions, their hopes and fears, thus confined to the respectable bosom of nature, made a father and mother the friends and comforters as well as the protectors of their children. The glory of the one, the happiness of the other, joined all the members of a family by the most endearing ties of the human heart ; and this society of pleasure and pain, confirmed by habit and consecrated by duty, remained inviolate to the end of life. If the event disappointed their expectation ; an inclination that had not discovered itself abandoned its object with so much the more ease as it would have been in vain to pursue it, and as it was necessary to give place to a new

**choice** : for it was marriage that gave a right to all the privileges of a citizen. The legislator had wisely presumed that he who declines taking a wife of his own, must reckon a little upon those of his neighbours ; and, in making adultery a crime, he made marriage an indispensable duty. It was necessary for every one to present himself at the assembly as soon as he had attained the age prescribed by the laws, and make a choice according to his rank, if it should not be altogether agreeable to his inclination.

Among a people of a martial disposition, even the softer sex has something grand and noble that takes a tincture from their manners. Hunting was the favorite diversion of the Samnite ladies : their skill in archery, their swiftness in the race, are accomplishments unknown to us ; yet we may easily imagine that these exercises gave a wonderful pliancy to their limbs, and a graceful ease to all their motions. When unarmed modesty was painted in their countenance ; but, soon as they put on the quiver, they assumed a warlike appearance, and courage sparkled in their eyes. The beauty of the men was of the grave and majestic kind ; and the image of war, ever present to their thoughts, gave their looks a loftiness that had something romantically wild and commanding. Among this warlike youth, it was easy, by the delicacy of his features and sensibility of his air, to distinguish v

Agatis, whose father Telephos was one of the old Warriors who had fought most successfully for the liberties of his country. This father when he resigned his arms in the hands of the young man had said: our old Warriors, my son, have sometimes told me, with more wit than good manners, that I should dress you like a lady and that you would make a fine huntress. Your father don't relish such jokes; but he comforts himself with the hope that nature has not given you the heart of a woman. Make yourself easy, says the young man fired with emulation, these old men perhaps may wish one day that their sons would follow my example: I am not concerned if my friends here should take me for a lady; the Romans, I dare say will not. Agatis kept his word, and discovered in his first campaigns an intripidity, an ardor that changed their raileries into encomiums. His companions would say to each other with astonishment: who could believe that this effeminate body of his was filled with such manly courage? cold, hunger, fatigue, nothing daunts him: as much a lady as he looks, he can meet death with the bravest of us.

One day in face of the enemy, Agatis seeing a shower of arrows fall at his feet without emotion: you, who are so handsome, how can you be so brave? says one of his companions remarkably ugly. At these words

they founded a charge. And you who are so ugly, replies Agatis, will you try which of us will take the standard from yonder battalion that comes against us ? he said : both sprang forward ; and in a few moments Agatis appears among his bleeding enemies with that same standard in his hand.

In the mean time he draws near that age when he must be enrolled among the husbands, and by the quality of father obtain that of citizen. The young ladies who heard of his bravery with esteem and saw his beauty with sweet emotion, with mutual jealousy watched his looks. One alone attracted them : it was the fair Cephalid.

She reunited in the highest degree that modesty and decent pride, those noble and enchanting graces that make up the character of the Sampite beauties. The laws, as I said, could not hinder their eyes from speaking to each other ; and the eyes of love are eloquent when it has no other language. If ever you have seen two lovers restrained by the presence of a jealous observer ; with what rapidity does the soul discover itself in the blaze of a stolen glance ? such a glance from Agatis had betrayed his secret wishes, his hopes, his fears, and all that ardent thirst of virtue and of glory that love had kindled in his breast. Cephalid seemed to command her eyes, forbidding them to meet those of Agatis ; but her eyes obeyed with f

reluctance, and sometimes did not turn away till after they had given their answer. One day above the rest, and which decided the triumph of her lover ; one day her eyes were fixed on him for some time, when all at once she raises them to heaven with an expression full of tenderness.—If I can read these looks, says he, I understand, that wish ; and if I understand, I will accomplish it. Tell me, sweet creature, can looks like thine deceive ? or do I flatter myself ? when these blue eyes were lifted up to heaven, did they not pray for me ? Well, heaven has heard your prayers : I feel it by the motions of my heart. But alas ! my rivals, and who can tell their number ? will all dispute this honor with me : a brilliant action depends on circumstances : should these concur to favor one more fortunate than I ; that happy man will have the choice ; that choice, fair Cephalid, must fall on you.

These perplexing ideas, like so many spectres, haunted him incessantly : they haunted his fare one too.—Was Agatis, says she, to chuse, I think I know his choice : I dare to risk my happiness upon it ; I have observed him well ; and I can read the secrets of his heart. Whether he salutes my companions or talks with them, he seems not to have in their company that complacency, that endearing fondness he expresses when I appear. I can perceive that even his love-inspiring

ice has something still more animated when he speaks to me. His eyes above all things . . . Oh ! his eyes have told me what they never told to mortal ; and would to heaven there were the only one that had distinguished me amidst the crowd ! yes, my dear Agatis, should he be sorry even to be handsome, was not for you. How much unlike is he to that rough troop of Warriors that scare me with their looks ! their bloody cut-throat air sets me trembling. Agatis is brave ; but he has nothing of the savage in him : even under arms, one can see in him *un je ne sais quoi* that attracts one's love. He will do prodigies of valor, I am sure : but after all, should fortune frown upon our love ; should any other man prevail . . . . Oh killing thought ! it makes my blood run cold.

Cephalid did not conceal her fears from her parent. Dearest of mothers, says she, if you wish the happiness of your daughter : invoke the immortal Gods for the glory of Agatis. I believe, I am sure he loves me ; and can I help adoring him ? you know the esteem he is in with the Warriors : he is the Hol of all my companions : I can see their disorder, their blushes, and the flutter they are in at his approach : one word from his lips elevates them.—Well, says her mother, with a smile, if he loves you, he will chuse you.—He would chuse me certainly, had he the right to chuse ; but mother . . . .—But

daughter, he will have his turn.—His turn! alas, I fear it will be too late, says Cephaliid looking down and blushing.—Why, daughter! one would think to hear you talk, that you were the only prize to be contended for! you flatter yourself too much.—Alas! I flatter not myself: I tremble: happy if I can only please the man I love.

On the eve of that day that was to open the campaign, Agatis, embracing his father, expressed himself thus: Farewell, dear author of my life: I hope you never shall embrace your son again; till you embrace him crown'd with laurels amidst the shouts of his applauding country.—'Tis nobly said, my child; this is a farewell worthy of my son. In truth I see you animated with an ardor that surprises me: what favorable divinity inspires you?—What divinity? O my father! the God of nature and the God of love inspire me with ambition to merit Cephaliid and imitate my father.—Oh! I understand; love has a hand in it: that can do no harm. Well, let us hear: it seems to me I have sometimes distinguished your Cephaliid among her companions; and if I am a judge of beauty, she is very handsome.—Like that fair Goddess who, on Idas' top, unveiled her beauties to the phrygian youth.—Methinks I see her, says Telephon, and, by her fine shapes, should take her for one of those nymphs that wait upon Diana.—Indeed my

father does this nymph much honor.—How  
 brightly is her gait !—and noble too—What a  
 fresh and blooming complexion she has got !—  
 fresh as the morning rose when it unfolds the  
 dewy leaves to meet the rising sun.—What fine  
 black hair, and how gracefully she wears it !  
 —But did you observe her eyes ? Of ather,  
 had you seen her eyes, when viewing  
 me and looking up to heaven they wished me  
 success in the day of battle !—I commend  
 your choice : she is a charming creature ;  
 but you must have rivals.—I dare to say I have,  
 and many of them.—Some of these rivals  
 will take her from you—Will they take her  
 from me ?—to be plain with you my son, I  
 dread it : our Samnite youth are brave boys.  
 —O father, it would ill become me to doubt  
 their bravery ; but that is the least of my  
 concern : give me but room to merit Ceph-  
 alid, and you shall hear of me anon.—Tele-  
 pon, who all this while had taken a pleasure to  
 tease him, could no longer suppress his tears :  
 what a noble present heaven makes us, clasp-  
 ing him in his arms, when it gives us a sensi-  
 ble and tender heart ! 'tis from that germ  
 that every virtue springs. My dear child,  
 you fill me with joy. I have blood enough in  
 my veins to make another campaign ; and  
 you promise so fair that I mean to bear you  
 company.

T

On the day of their departure, according to custom, the whole army marched by files before the young ladies, who were drawn up on the parade to animate the Warriors. The venerable Telephon marched by the side of his son. Ah, ah ! says the old Warriors, there goes Telephon : he has renewed his youth : where is he a going at his age ? to the marriage, says the good man, to the marriage. Agatis, as they advanced, made him remark Cephalid, who shone among her companions with superior lustre. His father, who had his eye upon him, observed that, as he passed before that lady, his sweet and serene countenance; flushed with a warlike ardor, grew terrible like that of Mars.

A great part of the campaign between the Samnites and the Romans had passed in observing each others motions without coming to any decisive engagement. The strength of both states consisted in their army ; and the Generals on both sides, like men of ability, were cautious of risking their troops. But the young Samnites, who were on the point of matrimony, glowed with impatience to come to action. I have done nothing yet, says one, that deserves to be recorded in the annals of my country : I shall have the mortification to hear myself named without any mark of distinction. What a pity, says another, they won't give us an opportunity to signalize ourselves ! I should have done

something this campaign. The common cry was : our General means to disgrace us in the eyes of the warriors and of the ladies. If he brings us back without fighting, they will have reason to think he was diffident of our courage.

But the wise General, who was at their head, heard all these rumors without emotion. From his slowness and delays, he proposed to himself two capital advantages : one was, to persuade the enemy that he was either weak or bashful, and to induce him, on that presumption, to attack him imprudently ; the other, to raise the ardor and impatience of his warriors to the highest pitch before hazarding a battle : both which succeeded to his wish. The Roman General haranguing his troops, represented the Samnites as wavering and ready to fly before them. The genius of Rome prevails, says he ; that of our enemies trembles before him, as afraid to meet his approaching fate. Come, my brave Romans, your superior and decided bravery will not dispute with them the advantage of the ground : let us march.— There they come, says the Samnite General to his impatient youth : let them come up within bow-shot ; and you shall have full liberty to fight for the ladies.

The Romans advance : the Samnites stand steady to receive them. Let us pour in upon them, says the Roman General ; a body at

rest cannot withstand the impetuosity of one that comes violently against it. When all of a sudden, the Samnites themselves rush forward with all the rapidity of coursers starting from the career. The Romans halt : they sustain the charge with the greatest firmness and intrepidity ; and the address of their general soon obliged the Samnites to defend themselves. They fought for many hours with incredible obstinacy. To form to ourselves, I will not say an *adequate*, but the *faintest* idea of such an assault ; we must imagine that men, who had no other passions but the love of liberty, the love of their country, the love of glory, and the love of the ladies, fought in those decisive moments for all those interests at once. In one of these reiterated attacks of the Samnites, Telephon was dangerously wounded fighting by the side of his son. This young man who tenderly loved his father, seeing the Romans give way on all sides, and thinking the battle won, yielded to the invincible instinct of nature, and drawing his father from the throng helped him to crawl to a small distance from the field. There at the foot of a tree, with tears in his eyes, he dressed the dangerous wound of his venerable sire. As he was extracting the dart, he heard the approaching noise of a troop of Samnites who had been repulsed. Where are you going, my friends ? says Agatis leaving his father. You run !

Well, if you please to take me for your guide, I'll show you the way ; and seeing the left wing of the enemy exposed, come, says he, let us attack their flank : the day is your own, if you will but follow me. This rapid manouvre threw the left wing of the Roman army in disorder ; and Agatis, seeing them routed cries out : pursue them, my friends, there is none dares oppose you : I leave you for a moment to assist my father. Victory, at last, declared for the Samnites ; and the Romans too much weakened by their losses, were glad to retire within their walls.

Telephon had fainted away under the violence of unrelenting pain ; but the care of his son revived him.—Are they defeated my son ?—They are giving them the finishing blow : things are in a fair way.—If it be so, says the father with a smile, try to bring me to life again : life is sweet to the conquerors ; and I would wish to see you married. The good man had strength to say no more ; for the great loss of blood had reduced him to the last extremity.

The Samnites, after their victory, were employed all night in taking care of the wounded : they spared no pains to save the worthy father of Agatis ; and he recovered, tho' with great difficulty, from his extreme debility.

The end of the campaign was the time ap-

pointed for marriage, for two reasons : the one was, that the services done to the state, being rewarded on the spot, might give greater force to the example ; the other, that during the winter the young husbands might have leisure to give life to new citizens before exposing their own again. As the actions of this campaign had been more brilliant than ever ; it was thought proper to give more pomp and splendor to its triumph.

There were few young ladies in the state but had, as well as Cephalid, some sentimental connexion with one or other of the young warriors ; and there is no doubt but each of them devoutly prayed for the success of that hero whose choice she hoped to fix it should fall to his lot.

The place of the assembly was a vast amphitheatre opening through triumphal arches where the Roman spoils were pompously displayed. The young Warriors were obliged to appear there in full armour ; the young ladies with the bow and quiver, and as elegantly dressed as the simplicity of a Republic, where luxury was unknown, would permit. Come, my ladies, said the mothers, anxious to adorn them, we must present you before this grand assembly with all the attractions that heaven has been pleased to give you. The glory of men is to conquer ; that of women to please. Happy they who gain the adoration of the young heroes who are that

Worthy to raise up protectors to the state! the palm of merit will overshadow their happy dwelling; and the public esteem will be a wall round about it: their children will be the first born of their country, and its most precious jewels. Holding such talk, these tender mothers braided the hair of the young virgins, adorning it with leaves of the vine and myrtle; and adjusted plaits of their veil in that taste that was most suitable to the character of their beauty. The buckling of the girdle that comes under their bosom was contrived in such a manner as to form an elegant and undulating drapery. They slung the quiver on their shoulders and taught them to present themselves gracefully leaning on their bow: and to give a more noble and easy air to their gait, they tucked up the glossy robe, *a la negligee*, so as to discover as they walked, the top of the right knee a little above the garter. This extraordinary care of the Samnite matrons was truly an act of piety; and gallantry itself, thus employed in the triumph of virtue, assumed her sacred character. The young ladies, viewing themselves in the pure cristal stream, never thought themselves handsome enough; each of them, magnifying in her imagination the advantages of her rivals, became diffident of her own.

But of all the vows breathed up to heaven on this important day, there was none more

ardent than those of the fair Cephalid. May the Gods favourably hear us, says her mother tenderly embracing her : but, my daughter, wait their pleasure with the docility and resignation of a humble heart : if they have given you any charms ; they know best how to reward them. It is your business to adorn their gifts by the graces of modesty. Without modesty beauty may dazzle the eye ; but can never captivate the heart : it is by that we inspire a tender veneration ; by that we obtain a kind of worship. Let that amiable modesty serve as a veil to desires that perhaps must be for ever extinguished before the setting sun and give place to a new engagement. Cephalid could not support this last idea without dropping some tears.—These tears, said her mother are unworthy of a Samnite lady. Know that of all those young Warriors that are now competitors for you and your companions, there is not one but has spilt his blood in defence of our lives and liberties ; there is not one but deserves you ; there is not one of them but you ought to think it an honor to receive at the hands of your country. Think of these things : dry up your tears and follow me.

By this time, the venerable Telephon was conducting his son to the assembly. Well, says he how does your heart feel ? I was well pleased with you this campaign, and I hope you will be mentioned with honor.--Alas ! says

the modest and tender hearted Agatis, I had but a moment to myself. I might have done something ; but you was wounded, and it was my duty to take care of you. If I have sacrificed my glory to your safety, I am far from repenting it. I should be sorry to have betrayed my country ; but I should be no less so to have abandoned my father. Thank heaven these duties have not been altogether incompatible : the event is in the hands of the Gods.—How religious we are when we are afraid, says his father smiling : you must own you was more resolute when you attacked the Romans : but take courage : all will yet be well : I promise you a fair lady.

Talking thus together they arrive at the assembly, where several generations of citizens seated round the amphitheatre formed an august spectacle. The interior of this inclosure was of an oval form. On one side, you saw the daughters at the feet of their mothers : on the other the fathers a step above the sons : at one end sat the council of the sages ; at the other, the youth not yet marriageable, placed according to their several ages. The new married people of former years took up the remoter seats. Respect, modesty and silence reigned over all. This silence was all of a sudden interrupted by the sprightly sound of the martial trumpet ; when the Samnite General

his appearance attended by those heroes that commanded under him. His presence struck an awe on all the competitors. He traverses the specious area, and goes, with all his suite, to take his seat among the sages.

The books are opened ; the archives of the state : and a herald reads, with an audible voice, the record that the Senate and Generals have made of the conduct of the young Warriors. He who, by any act of cowardice or unmanly behaviour, had stained his name, was condemned to the infamous punishment of celibacy ; till such time as he retrieved his honor by some noble action : but nothing was more uncommon than such examples. A simple probity, an unsuspected bravery was the least encomium that could be given a Samnite youth ; and it seemed a kind of disgrace to have done nothing but his duty. The most of them had given proofs of a courage, a virtue that any where else would have been accounted heroic, which here were scarcely distinguished by being so common. Some individuals indeed rose above their rivals by more brilliant actions : but the judgment of the spectators became more severe in proportion as they were entertained by the recital of more sublime virtues ; and these very actions, that had at first dazzled them by their lustre, retired into obscurity when compared with beauties of a higher order : as stars tho' of the first

magnitude, disappear at the approach of a more glorious luminary. The first campaigns of Agatis had been of this number : but when they came to describe the last battle, and to relate how he had abandoned his own father to rally his companions and renew the charge ; this sacrifice of natural affection to the love of his country carried it without a vote : tears streamed from the eyes of the old Warriors ; those who surrounded Telespon embraced him with joy, while the more distant expressed their congratulations by looks and jestures : the good man melted into tears ; even the rivals of his son looked on him with respect ; and the mothers pressing their daughters in their arms wished them Agatis for a husband. Cephalid pale and trembling has not the courage to look up ; her heart distracted between hope and fear had almost forgot to beat : her mother holding her in her arms dares not speak to her for fear of a discovery ; and imagines every eye fixed upon her.

Soon as the murmur of universal applause had subsided, the herald names Parmenon, and relates of this young man : that in the last battle the Samnite Generals' charger, being mortally wounded by an arrow, had thrown his rider : that a Roman soldier, seeing the hero in this defenceless state, was ready to pierce him to the heart ; when Parmenon, to save the life of the Chief, b

exposed his own by rushing between him and the drawn dagger, by which he had received a dangerous wound. It is certain, says the General assuming the discourse, that this generous citizen literally shielded me with his body ; and if my life is of any use to my country, they may thank Parmenon. At these words, the assembly, less moved with compassion, but no less with admiration at the virtue of Parmenon than that of Agatis, gave them equal praises ; and it was visible that the wishes and voices of the people were divided between these two rivals. The herald by order of the sages imposes silence, and the venerable judges rise up to debate. The opinions were for a long time equally ballanced : some pretended that Agatis ought not to have quitted his post to relieve his father ; and that he had only repaired his fault when he left his father to rally his companions ; but this unnatural sentiment was that of the smallest number. The oldest of the Warriors at last, calling them to order, spoke thus : is it not virtue that we ought to reward ? the question then before us is this : whether is it more virtuous to abandon an expiring father to save our country, or to expose one's own life ? both have done an action decisive of the victory : it lies in your breasts, virtuous citizens, to judge which of the two must have gone nearest the heart. Of two actions equally virtuous and equally

useful, the most painful deserves the highest reward.

Who can sufficiently admire the virtue of this people! it was unanimously resolved: That it is more generous in a man to tear himself from the arms of an expiring father whom he can relieve than to expose himself even to certain death: and the honor of the first choice was decreed to Agatis without a dissenting voice.

But the dispute that now arises will appear still more incredible. The cause had been decided in open assembly; and Agatis had understood that the principle of generosity alone had turned the scale in his favors. There arose in his soul a scruple that made him blush: no, says he to himself, it is an error in judgment; and I must not take the advantage of it. He demands a hearing, and silence being commanded, Agatis addresses his countrymen thus: "A triumph that I had not merited would be the torment of my life; and in the arms of my virtuous spouse, my happiness would be embittered by the thoughts of having obtained her unjustly. You think, O Samnites, in crowning me, to crown the man that sacrifices most to serve his country; but I must undeceive you. I love my country as I love my life, and I would die to serve it: but I love a lady dearer to me than life or ought that life can give that

is amiable or sweet ; and when I fought to merit her esteem, I fought for father, friends and country all in one : now let my rival judge himself and take the prize which I resign, if he is more virtuous than I."

Who can conceive the emotion this declaration raised in every breast ? on the one hand, it seemed to diminish the lustre of his actions ; while, on the other, it gave his character a stamp that had something more heroic, more extraordinary, and more astonishing than the most disinterested patriotism. This specimen of candor and ingenuity produced in his young rivals two very opposite effects. Some of them, applauding it with undissembled joy, seemed to express, by a noble assurance, how much they were elevated by the example ; while others, silent and crest-fallen, looked like persons oppressed by a weight above their strength. The silent approbation of mothers and daughters universally gave the prize of virtue to him who had the magnanimity to declare himself unworthy of it. The sages had their eyes fixed on Parmenon, who, with an air of serenity and composure in his looks, waited for a hearing, and addressed himself to Agatis thus : " How far a man's actions must be disinterested in order to be virtuous is a question I will not pretend to determine. To speak in the language of common sense, there is nothing but what a man does for the satisfac-

tion of his own mind ; but what I would not have done for the satisfaction of mine is the confession you have just now made : now had there been in my conduct hitherto any thing more generous than in yours, a point not yet decided ; the severity with which you have now judged yourself must undoubtedly give you the preference."

It was then the sages were truly at a non-plus, not knowing what course to take : they did not so much as put it to a vote. It was decided, by acclamation of the people, that both deserved it ; and that the second choice was unworthy of either, The most ancient of the sages at last rose up and addressed the assembly as follows : "Why should we retard, by our irresolution, the happiness of these young people ! their choice is already made in their own breast ; let us permit them to communicate to each other their secret wishes : if the object is different, each of them, without precedence, will have the lady he loves ; if they should happen to be rivals, let it be decided by lot : and I dare say there is not a lady in this assembly but will think it an honor to comfort the lover." Thus spoke the venerable Androgio, and his proposal was universally applauded.

Agatis and Parmenon are brought forward to the middle of the theatre. And when the heroes began to salute each other, the whole assembly wept. They stand : they tremble

they hesitate : neither dares to name the lady of his heart ; nor can either of them think it possible for the other to make a choice different from his own.—I love, says Parmenon, Venus herself adorned by the graces ; I love what heaven has form'd most amiable and sweet to please the sense or captivate the heart.—Alas ! says Agatis, you love what I adore : 'tis naming her to paint her thus : that virgin pride that animates her looks, that dignity of feature mixed with love, that heavenly something in her shape and gait betray the goddess as she moves along ; and woe be to him that makes a second choice.—You speak like an oracle, says Parmenon, for who can live and part with Eliann !—With Eliann, did you say ? what ! the daughter of Androgio ? is it Eliann you love ?—who then should I love, says Parmenon surprised at the joy of his supposed rival.—It is Eliann ! it is not Cephalid ! cries Agatis in raptures. Then we are happy : let me embrace you my dear friend ; you restore me to life. It was easy to judge, by their mutual embraces, that love had made them friends. The fates commanded them to approach, and, if their choice was different, to proclaim it aloud. At the names of Eliann and Cephalid, the whole theatre rung with shouts of applause. Androgio and Telephon, the brave eumenes father of Cephalid, and Melantes that of Parmenon congratulated each other with that

tenderness of affection so natural to old men of generous spirits. My friends, says Telephon, what fine children have we got here : and with what ambition will they strive to make us grandfathers ! I fancy myself a young man again when I think of it. To be serious, marriage was always my holiday : it seems to me I marry every young lady in the state ; for I feel the joys of a bridegroom every year. In this juvenile humor Telephon danced for joy ; and, as he was a widower, they advised him to put in for a lady. None of your jokes, says he : if I felt as young every day perhaps I might give you some reason to talk.

All went in procession to the temple to celebrate the nuptials at the altar. Agatis and Parmenon were conducted home in triumph ; and a solemn sacrifice was appointed, to thank the Gods for giving the state two such virtuous citizens.

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O R A T I O N  
O N  
*H A R M O N Y.*

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**T**HE following discourse on Harmony was written by Mr. Gresset of the French Academy probably in imitation of the diffuse eloquence of the Roman orator. The praises he gives to that art are for the most part serious and merited. But under that veil he takes occasion to introduce many strictures on the abuse of the other sciences.

It is given entire, excepting a panegyric on the French music, which tho' beautiful was omitted as too local to be relished by an English reader.

## Oration on Harmony.

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GENTLEMEN,

**I** have always hated the fulsome stile of panegyric, nor should I now have lent my voice to praise, were it not in favor of an art above all praise : a brilliant art consecrated in all ages by the love of mankind : a sublime art, by which the earth has ever held communion with heaven, and still continues to pay its tribute of adoration there. Need I say it is harmony ? your tastes reunited in its favors will support me better and carry me further than all the eloquence of a Cicero. Reflexion—flows with alacrity, where sentiment leads the way ; and the mind with rapidity subscribes to that merit which the heart adores. I am not going to prove that music ought to please ; it is one of those innate truths, whose proof every one carries in his own breast : nor am I philosophically to describe the manner in which it pleases ; it is one of those intimate pleasures which we must enjoy with transport without coldly analysing its causes. My design is briefly to display the dignity of this science to those who love it from instinct without reflecting on its intrinsic value : to demonstrate its numerous advantages to those

who look upon it only as an idle amusement ; in a word, to fortify the love of its admirers, and reconcile its enemies, if any such can be found.

My subject then is this : the dignity of harmony, and its utility : under these two ideas I mean to comprehend its every attribute and every grace. The flowers of rhetoric I leave to the votaries of pedantism : truth shall be my only eloquence : happy art, whose history is its encomium !

#### PART I.

The dignity of the arts, like that of birth, seems founded on three illustrious prerogatives : the antiquity of its origin : the power that attends it : and the veneration of mankind. That music enjoys this triple advantage is what I am going to prove.

The historians of the arts and sciences, like those of states and empires, have generally fallen into one common error : both of them, admirers of the marvellous rather than lovers of truth, have too often ascribed a fabulous origin to the art or state they meant to celebrate, or at least involv'd it in impenetrable darkness : it would seem as if they could not bear the thoughts of deriving it from small or obscure beginnings ; not remembering that there was a time when the most majestic rivers were only inconsiderable brooks proceeding from sources almost imperceptible. Authorised by such examples, I

might draw a mysterious veil over the cradle of harmony, or pompously introduce her as the daughter of Apollo, the progeny of some favorite muse on the sacred top of Olympus, or some imaginary Parnassus. But in truth music existed long enough before such imaginary Gods had a being even in fable. To these sublime fictions, I might join the golden dreams of Pithagoras : I might extol the music of the stars, the melodious revolutions of the planets, in their several orbits, round their respective suns, joining in harmonious concert through all the systems of the universe. But the proofs I mean to bring are of a very different color.

Let us consult the archives of the world ; those venerable records that have triumphed over oblivion ; those ocular witnesses of every age, the cotemporaries of every art : and what do they tell us ? that music is as old as the creation. They tell us that the amiable mother of mankind was the first who invented harmonious sounds : that the melodious notes of the little birds, naturally exciting her curiosity, soon inspired her with an ambition to rival them and try the compass of her own voice : that the surprising flexibility, the superior graces she found there soon convinced her that music, as well as speech, was a talent she had received from the hands of nature to enable her to praise her great Creator. We have reason to believe that

first attempts were gratefully employed in that noble, that delightful service : and we must conclude that this gift was some consolation to our unhappy parents after their disgrace, in cheering their hearts and raising their drooping spirits when exiled from the delicious garden.

But if this may not be thought sufficient ; let us open the sacred records : there, in the very first pages, we see that Jubal, the son of Lamech, was the father and master of those who first sung the birth of nature, and the recent bounties of the Creator on the harp and organ : we must of necessity conclude that vocal music was an art well known before his time ; since instrumental music, which is only its imitation, was already invented. Whether this last invention was the effect of chance, or an effort of genius, I shall not stop to enquire ; nor is it of any importance to the present question.

Taking our departure then from the morning of time, this infancy of the world, let us gradually descend through every succeeding age ; and, at every step, we shall find fresh and legible traces of the antiquity of this noble art ; we shall see it advance from beauty to beauty, from nation to nation, from throne to throne. Originating in the east, the first nursery of taste and genius, every age is ambitious to improve its charms. The Hebrew nation, the happy Assyria, the

learned Egypt, the wise and polite Greece, have successively made harmony a fundamental law of their several constitutions ; till at last it is become the common depository of all their public monuments ; but this requires some explanation.

In those early days, when the art of writing and painting the voice was yet unknown, men had no other way to preserve their history but in verses, which were frequently sung in order to make a lasting impression on the memory. By the help of this tradition they called to mind their origin, the exploits of their heroes, the precepts of their arts, the praises of their Gods, their morality, their religion ; yes their religion itself was founded, established and supported by the help of music. By this, the first legislators of nations were sure to engage, to persuade, to captivate the minds of the people. They well knew that the surest way to gain the human heart is by the bait of pleasure : that duty becomes easy when associated with amusement : that the austerity of virtue needs to be softened, and its lessons made palatable : that wisdom must wear a smile, and reason, when she makes her visit, must appear in an amiable dress. They knew that man is a valetudinarian : if, in order to cure him, you mean that he should take some bitter potion ; it will be necessary to sweeten the lips of the cup, that he may take -

full draught of life and health. Thus Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, the later Zoroaster, the Gymnosophists, add all the founders of the different religions, knowing the natural tastes of man for musical sounds, availed themselves of this sensibility : they gave harmony the first place in the sanctuary : in giving Gods to nations, they intrusted her with the history of these divinities, their hymns, the laws of their feasts, the ceremonies of their sacrifices, their triumphal, their nuptial, their funeral songs ; persuaded that their religion placed on the altar, by the side of peaceable harmony, would preserve its authority longer than if engraven on tables of brass and marble, or propagated by fire and sword.

Here perhaps some critic will be ready to interrupt me and say : we acknowledge the antiquity of music ; but what was the music of the ancients ? that art must then have been in its infancy, songs without delicacy, voices without taste, airs without sentiment, instruments without spirit, harmony without expression, and sound without sense ; to compare such a music as this with the elegant music of our days would be to compare the doubtful light of the morning to that of the sun in his meridian glory. Such is the blindness of prejudice : different ages are rivals and consequently enemies : the present age has always modesty enough to think it-

self wiser than those that went before it, and too much generosity to leave any thing to the invention of posterity. But I will take the liberty to say on the faith of a learned critic of our days, who was no bad judge in the matter ; I will take the liberty to say that music was never more regular than among the first inhabitants of the earth : then like a virgin in her lovely prime, fair without paint, lively without affection, she trod in the steps of amiable nature ; since those happy days, too often like an antiquated coquet, she is more studious to recover the beauties she has lost than to acquire new attractions. Can we be so arrogant as to imagine that the first-born of nature, her favorite children, were worse provided in the gift of invention than we ? had the ancients no taste for music ? among them, it is certain, musicians were more honored : among them music produced surprising effects, such as are not even to be expected in our days ; nor would they gain our belief were they not supported by irresistible evidence. By their music seditions were appeased : a stop was put to the most obstinate battles : tyrants were humbled : madmen were restored to their senses : the dying were rescued from the tomb. If any one shall pretend to doubt of these prodigies attested by profane authors ; I am ready to appeal to the sacred oracles : here, at the

found of the harp and organ, we see a company of Israelites instantaneously filled with the spirit of prophecy, intoxicated by a sacred enthusiasm, and as it were by intuition instantaneously instructed in the history of futurity. After so many brilliant and notorious facts, can we entertain a doubt of the charms of ancient harmony? let it not be said that their music was too simple, had too little variety; for we have already seen the brass, the ivory, and every precious wood animated by the breath of harmony. In those days they understood the use of many instruments unknown to our music: for where now are the ancient lyres, the Hazurs of the Hebrews, the golden Cystres of the Memphis, the Kynnors of Tyre, the Nables of Sidon? scarce are their names handed down to us; their use is irrecoverably lost; but we know enough to convince us that their effects were prodigious; an irrefragable proof that their music wanted neither beauty nor energy. And this brings us to the second proposition: the power of that noble art.

Here, I presume it would be superfluous to spend many words. The whole empire of nature is the empire of harmony: every thing that breathes, every thing endowed with sensation submits to her sovereign power: if any one dares rebel, he must be a wretch to whom nature has denied her tenderest feelings; he must have been born in

the absence of the graces, and under an unlucky planet, among savage rocks, or more savage animals : but what did I say ? the rocks themselves, the most savage animals feel the tender accents of music, and have more humanity than such an obdurate heart. At the voice of harmony, that amiable queen of the air, the most insensible beings are animated : the most gloomy are exhilarated ; the most savage are softened : wherever she appears, all nature smiles ; the heavens put on a more celestial blue ; and the sweet flowers, scattering around their aromatic breath, seem flush'd with livelier tints : if she but enters a sad forlorn solitude, a dreary wilderness ; in a moment all is awake, silence is banished, every thing lives, every thing listens, every thing assumes the voice of applause ; the hills, the brooks, the woods, the caves, and rocks repeat the enlivening sound. Amphion touches his lyre, the trees descend from the mountains, the rocks are changed into a thousand various shapes, the marbles seem to breathe, palaces arise out of the earth, and I behold a new creation : I see the city of Thebes.

But, alas ! what a horrid spectacle now presents itself to my view ?—Oh cursed avarice ! thou mortal enemy to every virtue : I see a band of Ruffians ready to plunge a favorite of Polyhimnia into the deep : audacious villains forbear ! permit him at least once more to take his lyre ! he touches it :

Amphitrite is calm, boreas retreats with all his stormy tribe precipitately : the monsters of the deep rising above the placid waves, assemble round the vessel of the savages : Arion is plung'd ; a friendly dolphin receives him on her back, and bears him with safety to the Lesbian shores. But the power of harmony is not confined to this earth, nor to the wider empire of the ocean ; she extends her conquests to regions beyond the limits of the sun. Euridice expires ; her amorous spouse, the musician of Thrace, dares to quit the regions of day : enlightened by the purer flame of love, he pierces through the boundless anarchy of chaos ; a living man descends among the dead : his triumphant lyre cuts a passage through those adamantine gates which neither gold nor steel, nor beauty itself could ever open to a living mortal : intrepidly he marches ; and now he passes the burning waves of Phlegeton, the Paphian queen, with all her smiling train following his steps : Orpheus sings ; his powerful voice dispels the horror of eternal night : eternal silence ceases ; eternal sleep is interrupted, and death, that frightful skeleton, suspends his dart : a crowd of fluttering unsubstantial ghosts surround the son of Calliope ; the torments of Tantalus are suspended ; Porphyrion, Syphisus, Ixion, Tantalus, enjoy some moments of ease ; Tesiphone is disarmed, Megora grows mild, and the fatal sisters forget to spin : the infer-

nal monarch himself, that inexorable tyrant, who never wept before, is surprised to find his heart susceptible of pity ; thrice he resists, and thrice he drops a tear.

These are some of the speaking images and eloquent ellegories under which antiquity has been pleas'd to paint the power of harmony. But to tread more surely in the path of truth, let us, if you please, draw aside the veil of fiction ; the reality is this : by those animated trees, those breathing marbles, those tamed monsters, we may understand that, among the first inhabitants of the earth, there were vast multitudes whose minds were still uncultivated, like a rich but neglected soil producing nothing but briars and thorns and every noxious weed, wandering up and down without laws, without manners and without country ; that these poor creatures were tam'd drawn into cities and brought to submit to salutary laws, by the wisdom and address of a few select mortals, who were either the peculiar favorites of nature, or had better improved her talents ; that these poor creatures were humanized by the sublime songs of those illustrious spirits, who with all the power of harmony painted to them the beauty of reason, the charms of order, and the happiness of society : by those infernal monsters subdued, those infernal torments suspended, we may understand that music often mitigates

pain, and sometimes cures the most dangerous disorders. Among many undeniable proofs of this truth, I might mention its efficacy in curing the poisonous and mortal bite of the Tarantula : should this be rejected as fabulous we have a recent instance in the northern parts of the western hemisphere where there grows a plant which induces a temporary madness ; the patient by a natural instinct happily becomes his own physician, continuing to sing and dance all the while. But thy salutary power, O harmony ! was always most conspicuous in curing the more inveterate and cruel torments of the mind : thou alone knowest the shortest and surest way to the human heart : thou canst lull asleep the most corroding cares and dissipate the deepest clouds of melancholy : the rapidity of thy enlivening sounds can, in a moment, give a new circulation to the blood, a fluidity to the animal spirits, a fresh vigor to every sluggish organ. If I am sad and dejected, my soul beclouded with those gloomy and malignant vapors that can proceed from no other source than from the Stygian Lake ; where shall I find a medicine for such eternal complaints ? where shall I find a friend to deliver me from such unmerciful enemies ? Is it in reason ? I have called upon her ; she has paid her visit, she has felt my pulse, she has shaken her head : but alas my complaints are not removed. When the mind is sick,

reason itself, like a sharp instrument, is a fresh pain : we should cease to suffer, if we could cease to think. Is it in the charms of agreeable company I must seek relief ? alas, a man is very unfit for conversation when he is uneasy in his own mind. Is it in your pompous writings, ye grave Philosophers, ye proud stoics ? I know, you can, in a smooth and florid stile, preach patience to others when at ease yourselves : but, let me tell you, your philosophy is too airy and speculative ; it may tickle the ear, but seldom or never reaches the heart : and I must take the liberty to say to all of you what a man in distress, tho' of great patience, said to his good friends : miserable comforters ! is my disorder then incurable ? is my melancholy invincible ? No : I invoke the smiling power of harmony ; an agreeable concert strikes my ear, the pleasure fills my every sense, more gracious images play before my fancy, and I am comforted : I am restored to myself again. Thus it may be truly said to the honor of this art, that a symphony of Lulli, an oratorio of Handel is more efficacious to dispel the clouds of melancholy than all the studied arguments of a Seneca.

But if any one should desire a more persuasive proof of the power of harmony, one of those sentimental proofs that carries its own conviction ; let us, if you please make a short excursion, and perambulate the field of nature : let us examine not only the hi-

or walks of life, those exalted spirits to whom education and a happy genius have given a taste for the polite arts ; but also those who seem almost reduced to pure instinct : let us examine a child, a clown, a barbarian, a savage, an animal ; and we shall find them all agree in giving the same evidence ; we shall find that every thing that lives has a relation, a sympathy, a natural connexion with harmony :

Let us examine nature in the dawn of infancy. I see a helpless infant in the cradle : he weeps, his mother threatens him, she scolds, she thunders, he redoubles his complaints ; she sings, and he is calm : he has already interrupted his cries to listen to more agreeable sounds ; he even imitates them by an inarticulate murmur. Thus the young nestling, under the wing of his dam, learns her notes ; he studies her airs, he repeats them ; and before he has got wings to fly, he prepares himself for the concert of the woods.

Let us examine nature in the simplicity of rural life. I see a people blind and ignorant even to stupidity : if you set before them all the riches of poetry, the graces of eloquence, the charms of painting, the utility of navigation, the beauty and grandeur of architecture ; being deprived of taste and knowledge, they see without understanding, they hear without admiration, they remain in

their native insensibility, they can relish no such pleasures : but if among this people, a concert of music strikes up ; they are all awake, they are all ear, they are all attention, they are all elevated, and humanity discovers itself.

Let us examine nature in the horror of the most savage countries ; in those isles separated from the rest of the world, in those barbarous regions, whose inhabitants are as wild and ferocious as the lions and bears their fellow citizes. Those inhospitable climates never submitted to the discipline of other arts ; harmony alone has had the address to command their allegiance, to penetrate those hearts inaccessible to every other grace. There is no shore so desolate, no echo so barbarous but has repeated the voice of music. The love of harmony pierces through the grossest barbarity ; through the eternal snows of the north, and the burning sands of the torrid zone. The unmerciful Hurons, the inhuman Canibals have their music, their songs of peace and war, their songs of triumph ; before they begin their sanguinary feasts in which they devour the captives that victory has put in their hands, they form bloody dances round those victims which are perhaps destined for their tables ; and what is still more strange, they sing their own funeral orations : in the midst of torments, in the midst of devouring flames, these barbarous heroes

to mind their former triumphs, and, comforted by the sweet remembrance, spend their last breath, and expire in the bosom of harmony.

After having taken this brief survey of the human, we might descend to that of animal nature: we might call upon the generous horse and the sagacious elephant, and every other animal to give their evidence in this question; and we should find by their answers that they are all more or less sensible of harmony; and that none of the sensitive creation is beyond the sphere of her attraction: but as this would be endless, not to say superfluous; let us in our return only observe and listen to the feathered inhabitants of the air. No sooner have the hours begun to open the gates of day than all nature is awake; the chearful birds in joyful notes proclaim the new-born light, and all prepare to join in concert to salute the rising sun. Their concert begins with the day, and ends not till approaching night: and when with solemn step the gloomy night advances, commanding silence and lulling nature asleep; then solitary Philomela, syren of the woods, thou takest up the song: night seems in pity to have granted thee this privilege to sooth thy tender melancholy: echo wakes with thee, while thou repeatest to her the story of thy woes; thy tender airs, thy harmonious sighs, breathed around, dissipate the horrors of darkness:

the queen of night herself, the sun's fair sister, as she moves along in silent majesty, listens to the mournful tale ; her chariot wheels move slowly as she passes over thy sweet hermitage : thus thou prolongest thy amorous complaints till Venus herself makes thee a signal to retire.

Now, ye rigid censors, ye Catos of the age, will you have the assurance to ask me again, where is the power of harmony ? all nature has answered the question. But I have another evidence to examine against you, to which you dare not object : a secret witness in your own breast. I will take the liberty then to ask you a few plain and simple questions which you may answer at your leisure. Does not nature, every hour of the day, whisper in your ears, that harmony is a gift she has received from heaven to sooth her melancholy, to mitigate her pains, and comfort her in all her labours ? what is the exercise, the amusement of so many thousands of the human species whom necessity condemns to labor for their fellow-mortals, whose hands, whose liberty, whose days are sold to cruel task-masters ? what does the early labourer of the plow ? the diligent mower on the sultry meadow ? the vine dresser on the burning hill ? what does the shepherd when he tends his flock ? what does the blacksmith amidst the flames ? what does the slave that is chain'd to the oar ? what do so many other

tals condemned to solitude and distress ? they sing : and by their music they drive away care ; they seem to shorten time, to accelerate the pace of the tedious hours : thus the hermit sings in his desert, the traveller in the horror of the woods, the exile in his retreat, the captive in his chains, the prisoner in his dungeon, the slave in the bowels of the earth where he is buried alive, sending up his voice to the regions of day : by an invariable attraction, a universal consent, everything declares, every thing attests that harmony is a pleasure necessary to nature. If we examine other pleasures, we shall find them either less extensive, or less powerful ; less pure, or less delicious : there are some pleasures of character and opinion, relished by one people, and unknown to others ; but harmony unites all tastes : there are some pleasures arising from study and contemplation, which can be enjoyed only by a few cultivated minds ; but none are excluded from the favors of harmony : there are some pleasures mute and inanimate, that speak only to the eye without touching the heart ; but harmony is always sentimental : there are some pleasures flat and languid, too uniform, and soon exhausted ; but where shall we find a pleasure more brilliant, more diversified, more inexhaustible than harmony ? it is a pleasure so engrafted in our nature that the Almighty himself when about to humble the pride and luxury

of Tyre, threatens that city by the prophet, that the voice of music should be heard no more within her walls ; a sacred testimony of the charms and power of music. Can we then be surpris'd that such an art should have gained the esteem and veneration of every age and nation ? the third proof of its nobility.

And here, gentlemen, may we not be allow'd to say, what has been said of beauty, that harmony is a citizen of the world, a native of every country, as speaking the universal language of love : like a sovereign queen she walks the universe, preserving every where her proper character and dignity : whatever climate she traverses, like the sun, she is never out of her own dominions ; wherever there are hearts, she is sure to find subjects. Such, from age to age, has ever been the prerogative of harmony. Other arts, since their birth have suffered fatal revolutions, either by the fury of Mars, or by governments inimical to the muses : they have gone through ages of darkness, ignorance and barbarity, in which the God of taste was banished from the world, learning abolished, the muses silenced, and the arts buried in oblivion : in a word all the sciences have been either totally eclipsed or banished into some obscure corner of the earth ; but music never lost its lustre : its rays pierced through the darkest clouds of ignorance : the

temples of harmony were never deserted. Let us examine the remains of sacred and profane history, and they will tell us that all ages and nations, especially the more polite, have ever been ambitious to honor music ; that it has been recommended by the gravest philosophers, cultivated by the greatest heroes, adopted by the wisest republics, and honored by the greatest monarchs as the favorite science of kings and conquerors. Egypt will tell us that the last of their Ptolemies took his name from this art. If we stop a moment among the polite Greeks, they will tell us that their Olympus was peopled by Gods who were lovers of music, and that Apollo the sovereign of the lyre presided in Parnassus, which was the temple of harmony ; that the pleasures of their Elysium consisted in one uninterrupted concert ; and that the torments of Tartarus were not only a chain of tortures, an ocean of implacable fire, but also a shocking discord of voices ; a horrible confusion of dolorous cries, and an eternal dissonance : they will tell us, that in the best days of Athens, it was shameful to be ignorant of music ; that the sages of the Arco-pagus were its disciples, it being a part of the attic politeness, which Socrates learned in his old age ; and that a person who had no taste for it was look'd upon as a stupid mortal who had never sacrificed to the graces.

From this cloud of witnesses, you see there results a clear and satisfactory proof. But away with all popular applause ! away with all human testimony ! the laurels with which I long to see harmony crown'd must be taken from the altar. Yes, gentlemen, it is in this sacred light I love to contemplate the honors conferred on this noble science : I love to hear the voice of harmony employed in speaking to the Gods, in singing their praises, in deprecating their wrath, and breathing up to heaven the incense of the world. Let us turn our attention for a moment, and listen to the religions of every age : here the temples of Isis and Ofyris ring with the sound of the Cystres and Canopes ; there by the dawn of day the Magi of Persia and the Ignicols take their silver harps to meet the rising sun, and receive his first smiles as he appears above the waters ; to adore, in that luminary, the God of their fathers, the radiant oromazes, the fountain of eternal light ; and if we go a little further, we shall hear the banks of the Ganges made vocal by the hymns of the Bramins in honor of Aurora : here, in our return, the Grecian shores every day repeat the name of Jupiter, Olympus, and the banks of the Tyber that of Bacchus ; while the Druids of Gaul and the Bards of Albion, in loftier strains, sing the praises of Teutates the God of war.

Such has ever been the universal practice. All employ the voice of harmony, not only as a more sublime language, but also to fix the attention of the people, to calm the passions, to attune the spirits, to warm the heart, and prepare it for the more immediate presence of the divinity. But why should harmony stoop to receive the homage of idolaters? harmony who has been so often honored by the God of Israel to perfume the sacrifices of his chosen people? was it not at thy voice that the armies of Israel advanced to battle under the standard of the most high? Joshua besieges Jericho; but the conquest is not reserved for an arm of flesh: by the supreme command of heaven, the chief priests take the harmonious trumpets and Jericho is devoted: the trumpets sound the alarm, the towers begin to tremble, the Almighty speaks, the walls tumble, and Jericho is no more.

But, passing over a long interval of time, let us hasten to the days of David, that glorious æra of harmony. By this prince we see her introduc'd into the tabernacles of the Lord; there she enters followed by a glorious train of blooming virgins, the daughters of Zion, to support the majesty of the holy place, to augment the pomp of sacrifice, and give a visible beauty to religion. David himself goes before the ark, dancing and regulating his steps by the ravishing sound of the harp: in all his hymns, those eternal monu-

ments of his love, he calls upon the harp and the organ, the trumpet and the loud sounding cymbals to assist his feeble voice : he awakes all the echoes of Jordan, he invites universal nature to sing the glories of its author, calling upon every voice harmoniously to join in one great concert of praise and adoration : and the care and munificence of this religious prince made the Levites the first musicians in the universe.

And even under the new law which introduces a more perfect sacrifice, music has not been totally neglected. The oracle of Africa says : " I can never sufficiently admire the music of our temples : seiz'd with awe and reverence, when I enter the house of God, I feel a sensible emotion, filled, like Paul, with sacred enthusiasm, I seem transported into the highest heavens ; my soul, arising above humanity, seems to join in concert with superior intelligences, and my heart, glowing with love, loses itself in the bosom of the divinity."

In this unanimity of voices in favor of harmony, can there be a veneration more conspicuous, more uninterrupted, or more incontestable ?

This glory of the art has always reflected a lustre on the artists : they have been honored with laurels and triumphal crowns, with the applause of theatres and public assemblies.

by statues and monuments erected to their memory, in a word, by every thing that men could invent to perpetuate the remembrance of genius. Hence we see they are still a people dear to mankind, an advantage often denied to the adepts of other sciences : we shun a critic, we laugh at a chimist, and scarce take any notice of a grammarian ; on the contrary every body loves the company of a musician ; he is naturalized in every climate, welcome to all hours, and the companion of every man of taste and sentiment : hence we see also that the memory of musicians of former ages is more amiable and grateful to humanity than that of the most renowned conquerors : false heroes and real tyrants, conquerors crown'd with bloody laurels have often been sent into the world for the destruction of mankind ; but illustrious musicians for their pleasure and happiness : conquerors have often left the world by an untimely death, loaded with the hatred of their fellow-mortals ; while famous musicians have commonly expired in peace, regreted by whole nations. Yes, the name of a tender Orpheus will be more carefully preserved in the temple of fame than that of a furious Alexander.

Such is the dignity of music ; a dignity founded in the antiquity of its origin, illustrated by its powerful effects, and confirmed by the veneration of every age, and every

nation : but to the proofs of its dignity let us join those of its utility, a praise more substantial and more interesting.



## *Oration on Harmony.*

### PART II.

WERE music only an agreeable art, a science of pure amusement ; it would nevertheless be a very useful science, a very necessary art : for what can be more necessary to man than innocent pleasure ? is it not one of the daily wants of humanity ? but, without further preambles, let us come to the point. I say that the state is indebted to harmony for more solid and important services than those of simple pleasure. I doubt not but many in this learned age will think I advance a paradox, or at least a truth very little understood : but truth is not the less genuine because it lies neglected, no more than gold for being buried in the earth : let us dig for it, and bring it to the light of the sun, which alone can give it its proper lustre : let us bring it to every trial that art and experience can furnish us to ascertain its intrinsic value. At any rate, I don't hazard a sentiment that is singular and without authority, when I assert that music is as useful as it is agreeable ; I only adopt the sentiment of the best and wisest men of antiquity. In fact

If the importance of this art had not been universally acknowledged ; can we imagine that the legislators of Egypt, of Persia, and of Athens, those masters of nations, would have made it a law of their constitution ? is it possible they could have placed harmony hand in hand with religion and given it the sacred seal of immortality ; unless they had judged it necessary to support and perpetuate the public happiness of the state ? would the austere Lyeurgus, in forming a republic of heroes, have inscribed it among the rigid laws of the Lacedemonians ? should we have expected to see the following inscription on the school of Pythagoras : *procul, O procul este profhani !* begone, profane wretches ! let none enter here who is ignorant of music : profane wretches, begone ! would Plato have admitted it in his commonwealth of sages ? would the sagacious Aristotle and so many other philosophers both of Greece and Rome have recommended the study of it as a science equally tending to the politeness of manners, the progress of virtue, the ornament of learning, and the peace of the world ?

These gentlemen, are some of the masters from whom I learn the utility of harmony : and if I should chance to bewilder myself in following the steps of such illustrious guides ; I shall think it more honourable, even to lose it by a generous boldness in the disco-

very of new truths which a lucky hint had thrown in my way, than pusillanimously to creep along with those reptile souls, those spirits too wise, or too superstitious, those servile geniuses who dare not, even for a moment, step out of the circle of establish'd truths, nor walk in any path unless they see track of some animals of their own shape and size. But don't mistake me, as if I meant to persuade you by such great authorities : No ; I mean that truth and reason shall have fair play in this question without submitting to any authority whatsoever ; that you should see with your own eyes and judge impartially of the truth of facts from that clear and cogent evidence which I shall lay before you.

We may consider a state in two different lights : as a learned body, and as a body politic : now a science, to deserve the name of useful, ought equally to contribute to the happiness of the one, and the ornament of the other : for the happiness of the one, it ought to polish the manners, rectify the passions, and unite the minds of the people ; for the glory of the other, it ought to enrich, assist, and adorn the learned arts : and who can dispute with harmony this double title ? useful to the manners, which it purifies, to the citizens, whose minds it unites ; it must be useful to the body politic ; useful to the arts, which it certainly embellishes ; it must be useful to the republic of letters.

If the power of harmonious sounds alone is so great over the human heart ; what force and energy, what influence on the manners must the lessons of wisdom have when communicated to the mind through the powerful and charming voice of harmony ? for such has always been, and such ought ever to be the design of sublime music. This, in its proper character, is an instructive science, but more chearful than the other sciences : an amiable philosophy ; but more plain, more active, more efficacious than that of the schools : a pure morality ; but not so cold, so dry, so heavy as that of the stoics ; but more social, more tender of our foibles, more adapted to the taste of humanity. Such was the opinion of those early sages, those kings and legislators, who were philosophers, and fathers of their country. They had studied man ; and they saw him just as we see him to day : they saw that the mind of man, born free, perhaps a little mutinous, can hardly bear the thoughts of a master : impatient of every yoke, ashamed to own his ignorance, jealous of his natural independency, especially in matters of opinion, he yields but with reluctance to the precepts of a stranger, nor will he easily consent that any foreign authority should prescribe laws to his sentiments. If in this disposition of mind, he is left to his own conduct, to do whatever seems good in his own

eyes ; in what a labyrinth of error and delusion must he be involved ? and what favorable Ariadne shall come to his assistance ? surrounded as he is by rocks and shelves, and set adrift to steer his own course, without a compass and without a pilot, what shall become of him ? the pilot he wants is one that has address enough to take the helm without assuming the airs of a master ; that would set him right in his ideas without offending his delicacy ; one that would flatter him, and steer him insensibly into a safe harbour. Such were the political views of the sages I have just mentioned ; and this artful Proteus, this amiable master of manners they thought they had found in this noble art I am now laying before you. In those days the priestesses of harmony sung in the sublime strains of the doric mode, the worship of the Gods, the noble sentiments of heroes, the respect due to the laws, the love of our country, the contempt of death, and the hope of immortality. Thus the lesson passed into the mind by the favor of amusement : the pleasure of the ear became the monitor of the heart : and the man who came to such entertainments only to gratify his curiosity had often the happiness to return home with the love of wisdom deeply engraven on his soul.

Speak then, heroic harmony, is thy aim, or is thy nature chang'd ? hast thou no le

that power over the manners, which was once so conspicuous? such a thought were highly injurious. Even in our licentious days, thou still maintained thy prerogative; thou art still able to illuminate, to instruct, to touch the heart: here thou singest the calm and placid virtues of the citizen; there the more brilliant virtues of the hero: here the triumph of innocence; there the just punishment of audacious villainy. Sometimes thou takest a pleasure to awake the indolence of the rich and great who are fallen asleep in the soft arms of luxury, to tell them some truths which they would not chuse to read, nor perhaps have patience to hear from a graver orator; the charms of thy company procures them lessons from which their disrelish of study would forever exclude them. Thou canst decoy the impious wretch into the sacred temples; yes, the impious wretch, whose ear is shut to every other precept, is still open to thy penetrating sounds: and there, when thou raisest thy voice like thunder, rending the trembling air, thou strikes a terror into the heart of the profane intruder; thou sets before his eyes the living God descending all in flames, riding sublime upon the whirlwind's wing, escorted by a troop of mighty cherubin, and clothed in terror; he sees the lightnings flash; he hears the thunder of his chariot-wheels: the miscreant shrinks; but whither can he fly to

thou that arm inevitable, omnipotent, whose stroke can reach beyond infinity of space? Anon descending from the flaming mount in milder accents, thou dissipates his fears, breathing a ray of hope into his breast; thou paintest, to the eye of his internal vision, the God of love, the great Messiah seated on a throne of mercy; and, pointing to the golden sceptre in his hands, thou bids the trembling rebel kiss and live. Have I said too much, gentlemen, may I not appeal to your own experience? have not your hearts often felt the grand sentiments that harmony produces in the sanctuary?

Can we doubt of its power to illuminate to ennoble, to elevate the mind when we consider that the disciples of Zoroaster, instructed by nature, usually began the day with a harmonious concert? They were no doubt ambitious to prepare themselves for the contemplation of truth, persuaded that, by the soft accents of music, the soul, retiring within herself, would naturally put on that equanimity, that silence of the senses, that perfect equilibrium of spirit so necessary to pure speculation; and that thus, shaking off the corporeal chain of the passions, and rising on the seraphic wings of love, she would take a nobler flight to converse with those happy spirits who are permitted to enter the temple, to approach the altar, and

drink full draughts of truth from the pure source of uncreated wisdom. The same sages concluded the day with some Lydian airs on the flute, to call in the wandering thoughts that had been roving through the day in pursuit of external objects ; to dispose the mind for the downy favors of Morpheus, to invoke silence and peaceful dreams.

Can we doubt that harmony is able to calm the most violent passions ? The annals of history and poetry present us with a clear demonstration of it : here we see rage disarmed, fury mollified, sedition quelled, anger pacified, audacity repressed, the impetuosity of an Achilles moderated by the lyre. And in the sacred pages we see an infernal fury driven from the breast of the perfidious Saul by the harp of David : at the voice of harmony, peace from heaven descends into the heart of that jealous prince.

Now gentlemen, can you produce me any other profane science that has such an influence on the manners, such a discretionary, such an unlimited power over the passions ? If you can, it will be a discovery greater than that of Columbus ; as it may be a means of opening a new hemisphere of knowledge in the literary world. Let us, if you please, for a moment draw aside the veil of prejudice and education, and with a philosophic eye examine the intrinsic value of those sciences so servilely adored in the common-

wealth of letters : let us, for a moment assume a prudent scepticism, and, without exaggeration, let us dare to tell the whole truth ; let us not, by a literary idolatry unworthy of true taste, blindly bow the knee to idols that perhaps deserve only the adoration of the credulous and superstitious vulgar. And now I would call upon you who are their scrupulous adorers to give account of your worship. Say then : what influence on the manners, what power over the passions have all those arts which we owe to the leisure and ingenuity of the Egyptian priests ; accurate geometry, audacious astronomy, profound Algebra ? while the mind is lost in calculations, wandering among the stars, or buried in deep meditation, what progress is made in virtue ? Curious sciences, but of a neutral nature, they give all to speculation, little to sentiment, and nothing to the man.

What influence on the manners has the study of grammar and languages ? while it plunges the memory in a chaos of words, it leaves a shameful vacuum in the heart ; a science too puerile and superficial, that teaches us rather to name the virtues than to practice them.

What influence on the manners has profane eloquence ? it captivates the senses, emits a brilliant sound that flatters the ear, but seldom reaches the heart ; like those artificial and lambent flames that kindle blaze and e-

porate in a moment : it furnishes the state with more obstinate speakers than good citizens : in a word if it must be granted that eloquence has any influence on the passions ; the greatest orators must remember that they are indebted for this influence to the power of harmony, as we shall perhaps take occasion to illustrate in its proper place.

What influence on the passions has the boasted study of history ? what does this mirror of mankind hold up to us ?—a long series of the errors of all ages, of suffering virtues and triumphant vices. Here we see heroes and heroines loaded with chains, dragged to the scaffold, and suffering under the hands of cruelty in the garb of justice ; while infamous Varlets, monsters disgraceful to humanity, are crown'd with laurels, raised to imperial thrones, and even worshiped as saints by the blind votaries of interest and superstition : there we see tyrants fighting under the specious banner of patriotism, and sedition under the standard of liberty : we see the caprice of nations and the blunders of kings, the rise, the progress and revolutions of states and empires, with all the occurrences that happen in that ancient and impregnable empire of opinion and self-interest.—Sad monuments of human folly ! we own the likeness, as drawn from the life, alas, in too durable colors : but may we not sometimes be tempted to wish, for the honor of poor humanity,

that such painful knowledge had been buried in eternal oblivion, and veiled from the eyes of posterity? unhappy science! that must present us with more crimes to shun than virtues to imitate.

In a word, what influence on the manners has that little talent of Theſes and ſophiſms which we honor with the ſpecious name of philoſophy? ſuperannuated chimeras, captious trifles, errors more or leſs happy; a jingle of ſonorous words, a war of dexterous ratiocinations which makes reaſon ſmile and often bluſh, while ſhe obſerves a ſtrict neutrality; a labyrinth where truth is loſt in the chace without a poſſibility of finding her?—Is this philoſophy? is it not rather ignorance dreſt up in the luminous and brilliant robes of ſcience? yes, her affectation, the oſtentatious diſplay of her charms, betray this Abigail, while ſhe awkwardly imitates her miſtreſs, admiring her own beauties in the glaſs.

Such however are the pretended ſciences in which our faireſt and moſt blooming days are ſpent. O irreparable loſs; too little regretted! what delicious moments are wantonly thrown away! This is purchaſing error at a very extravagant price. O fleeting youth! O charming hours! why are you not rather conſecrated to the culture of the heart, the refinement of manners, and the ſtudy of true happineſs, than in claſſical

fles and other arts equally useless, did we but know that more easy and delightful art of studying nature, learning her language and walking in her steps. But don't mistake me, gentlemen, as if I meant to depreciate true philosophy ; no, I mean only to run down the infamous impostor who assumes her dress. I grant that eloquence is useful in explaining the laws of nature and of nations, and setting in a proper light the different rights and interests of mankind ; that the languages are useful to travellers, and to open the seals of those treasures of knowledge which a confusion of tongues has lock'd up from the ignorant and illiterate ; that geometry is useful to navigation and all the mechanic arts, and the science of numbers to commerce ; that physics is necessary to the medical art, and history to satisfy our curiosity ; that even logic is useful in the hands of a Loke, where words are only allowed to act in their proper character, as the humble representatives of our clear and distinct ideas, when joined together or separated in our discourses just as their constituents agree or disagree in the mind of the speaker and hearer.

All this I grant : but it will be readily allowed on the other hand that the utility of these arts falls but indirectly on manners ; that these sciences are foreign to the man, agreeable perhaps to the mind, but useless to

the heart ; that the heart is more immediately the province of harmony ; that she knows all its secret recesses, can move and regulate at her pleasure its finer springs ; springs so delicate as to escape the best optics of all other profane sciences. If all this must be granted, I think there can remain no doubt of the influence of harmony over the manners of every individual of the human species who comes within the sphere of her activity ; but this is not all : a little reflexion will convince us that harmony has not only an influence over man as an individual, but also as he is a member of society : and consequently must be useful in general to the safety and happiness of the body politic.

The concord of the people is the basis of all government, the seal of monarchies, and the support of diadems. The greatest and strongest empires, before they were destroyed by foreign wars, have always been first shaken by civil discord, by anarchy and intestine commotions, that, like a hectic fever, imperceptibly wasted and preyed upon the vitals of the constitution ; and what is still more remarkable, the first symptoms of this decay have been often brought on by those very members and powers employed to rectify and patch it up. Yes, the greatest enemies any country can have are those enemies that lodge within its own bosom, discordant citizens eternally jarring, ever

variance amongst themselves, croaking ravens, false patriots, always discontented, always opposing and weakening the hands of government, and whose real principles can only be explained by him who is certainly their author, the father of discord. Now can there be a greater bulwark, a more impenetrable shield against the shafts of dissension than peaceable harmony? She marches with the olive branch in her hand: peace walks before her: love and friendship are her companions, and concord waits upon her steps: the hearts of the citizens flock around her standard; while she marshals and unites them by those endearing ties, that amiable equality that levels all distinctions and makes society delicious. In the palace of harmony all is peace, all is love, all is friendship, all is unanimity: within her walls you neither hear the voice of discord nor popular clamors, the wrangling of the schools nor the more noisy disputes of the bar; nothing is to be heard there but agreeable accords, favorable acclamations, and shouts of applause. Can it be said that harmony ever kindled any of those flames, those conflagrations that have so often been fatal to states? those wars of opinion, of error, of superstition; any of those sophisticated disputes so furiously maintained to realize chimeras; those literary schisms formed rather to attack than defend the truth; those battles of one sect armed

against another under different banners, and all that monstrous and infernal spawn of vipers that have been so often hatched in the bosom of other sciences? Other sciences, it is certain, have often raised pupils who have been very turbulent citizens, and very pernicious to their country; who nursed in some gloomy solitude had sucked in with their milk the very chyle of discord, false zeal and sedition, and who made their appearance on the stage of life only to disturb the peace of the world. But can history, that faithful witness of all ages, charge harmony with such crimes? what age or nation ever complained of her? Were her hands ever stained with blood? Her pupils, far from being dangerous citizens, have always been of a character remarkably easy, social, and polite, formed for the tender connexions of life; a character so necessary to the tranquility of the state; a character which the graver sciences never give, but often take away. What a strange contrast do we see between the manners of the literati and the lovers of harmony! let us penetrate into those dark recesses inaccessible to mirth, those mansions where melancholy keeps the door; where, silent and sad, the solitary power of learning reigns: there I behold a nation of gloomy hypocondriacs, pale and ghastly spectres, and on their wrinkled brow a cloud of everlasting grief, misanthropic dreamers, self-tor-

menters, voluntary martyrs of cruel studies and gloomy systems that can yield no happiness, grown hoary in a chaos of vague and inconsistent notions, and forever at variance with the graces, cold, dry, and ponderous writers, impotent of taste, in whom the fire of genius is totally extinguished. Let us draw them out of their lurking places, and transport them for a moment into the commerce of life, into the duties of a citizen ; confused, disconcerted and almost distracted, they blunder at every step, and every moment transgress the rules of decency and good manners ; tired of every body, and every body of them, they return to their old haunts, to bury themselves again in the rubbish of antiquity, their only element ; like those nocturnal birds of bad omen, who hate the lights of the sun and shun the company of all other birds : these to be sure are citizens very useful to the state, to their country, and to the age they live in ; and from their utility we may judge of that of the sciences they study. From such philosophers, and such philosophy good Lord deliver us. But leaving those habitations of darkness where we have been too long detained ; let us now enter those gracious porticos, those verdant arbors where the charming voice of harmony calls us : here every thing enchants us ; joy sparkles in every eye, pleasure smiles in every face : see nothing here

but cultivated minds adorned and enriched with all the brilliant ideas of poetry and fable : nothing but worthy and amiable citizens, kind and grateful, united and happy : here we see even leisure, nobly employed, amusing herself with sympathy, friendship, and love : here the first merit is to be amiable, the first science is to be happy ; and what is the use of talents unless they lead us to pleasure, union, and happiness ?

Here let us prevent an objection that some critics will be apt to make : music, say they, is a soft effeminate art, proper only to enervate the mind and extinguish its native vigor. Ah ! if such was the effeminacy of this art, would Mars have placed it on his triumphal car by the side of victory ? would he not long ago have banished the pipe, the haut-boy, the trumpet and the drum from the field of battle ? but he well knew that such martial concerts are the life and soul of war ; that this harmonious combination of nervous and masculine sounds warms the heart, inflames the brave, and gives courage even to the timid ; that it drowns the formidable noise of those terrible machines that breathe death and destruction across the field, tormenting the air ; that these warlike symphonies kindle in the breast an heroic ardor, that, like the electrical fluid, flies from man to man, from rank to rank ; that they embellish the rough theatre of war, and make even

death beautiful. Will any one after this say that music enervates the mind? but not to dwell longer here, let us hasten to our last proposition, which was to prove that music is useful to the republic of letters, by enriching, aiding, and embellishing the arts.

If we take a step back, and traverse the ages of darkness, we shall see the finer arts rising like so many streams from the fruitful source of harmony. In the order of time, poetry first presents itself to our view; for harmony is the parent of verse. Musical sounds were first invented, and reflection afterwards joined the corresponding words: there was no poetry then without music: and if since that time poetry often goes alone, yet she still retains an indelible air of proximity; speaking features that evidently prove her to be the genuine progeny of harmony. Has not poetry always retained the symbols and attributes that are common to her with this queen of the air? we say the trumpet of Homer, of Milton, of Tasso, the lyre of Horace, the lute of Anacreon. Why should poetry thus assume the names of those several instruments, and apply them respectively to each different genius of her art, if she was not ambitious to resemble harmony, and sure to please by that resemblance? hence those sonorous rhymes, those flowing numbers, those regular pauses, and all that harmonious language that is the characteristic

of fine poetry; that warms the heroic ode, that elevates the sublime epopea, that enlivens the smiling eclogue, that interests us in the sighs of the tender elegy; that inexpressible charm that moves the passions and constitutes the very essence of poetry.

Methinks I hear the noble Melpomene gratefully acknowledging the favors of harmony as the author of her favorite art: yes, Melpomene, thou rememberest when tragedy, yet in her infancy, was taken from the wains of Thespis and introduced by harmony to the theatres of Greece, to share with her the honors of the stage, and the applause of Attica.

Minerva herself will own that even eloquence is indebted to harmony for more than half its charms: Quintilian justly observes, that no man can be a complete orator who is ignorant of music; that without this he can never understand nor employ that number, that gracious euphony which is the mother of persuasion; that beautiful mixture and variety of sweet and nervous sounds, those harmonious cadences, those artful silences, those sudden and energetic attacks, those premeditated suspensions, those speaking gestures so full of expression, that decency of motion, those pathetic and penetrating turns that rouse the mind of the hearer, fix his attention and command assent; in a word that inexpressible

*Je ne sais quoi* that makes a Cicero or a Demosthenes.

Would time permit, we might also have the testimony of the smiling Thalia, who has often called in the assistance of the Tyrian flutes, without which the celebrated Roscius never acted. But without entering into such a detail as would perhaps be more curious than instructive ; if any one should be desirous to form a just estimate of the absolute force and momentum of harmony ; let us take a view of this art in a comparative light, in its power to imitate nature, which I presume is the end proposed by every art. We know that poetry of all kinds must look to other arts for its support : the epic poet, the tragedian must beg the assistance of eloquence : the orator begs the assistance of grammar : the grammarian must study different languages : every one begs or borrows from another ; but harmony, without calling in any foreign auxiliaries, can imitate nature much better by her own intrinsic force. Now, if this be true ; the power of harmony to enrich, aid and embellish the other arts will hardly be disputed. And here, gentlemen, I must appeal as the only means of proof, to your own internal sensations as men of taste and feeling. Say then, does not harmony know, infinitely better than simple declamation, how to imitate the voice of complaint, the true tone of the passions, the profound

sighs; the groans, the dolorous cries, the tender languishments, the interrupted breathing, the pathetic inflexions, and all the energy of the heart? harmony, conscious of her sovereign power, seems audaciously to rival nature; she expresses, she personates, she articulates every thing without the help of words: neither the pencil of Apelles, the chisel of a Phidias, nor the needle of Minerva herself, can give their imitations that soul, that expression, that life which music gives to what she characterizes. In her symphonies I find all nature; I feel, in all the velocity of sound, an impression quick as lightning; more rapid than thought.—Here its the tumult of a battle she means to imitate: I hear the roaring of the cannon, the rattling of the sanguinary sword, the showers of mortal hail, and the discordant voice of death thundering across the field.—There its a black and rueful tempest, a woeful shipwreck: the horror pierces through the marrow of my bones: I hear the foaming billows lashing the shore: the air grumbles, while the loud thunder in repeated peals burst all around: the day is changed into night, the winds whistle, the murmuring sea retreats, the earth trembles.—Here a frightful spectre issues from the tomb: Avernus opens her capacious mouth; while, across the pale glimpses of the moon, I hear the dismal yell of plaintive ghosts, the rattling of chains amidst

the roar of the black surges of Coeetus.— There it is the subterranean forges of the God of fire : I hear the ponderous hammers, regularly fall in redoubled strokes upon the groaning anvil, heav'd by the potent arm of the fiery Cyclops.—Here Morpheus sends down his soporific vapors, and a hero is lulled asleep : by the aid of music I can read his thoughts, I can guess his dreams, smiling or frightful, furious or calm.

Such is the magic power of harmony : yes, in all thy imitations, we find a just and striking resemblance ; we find truth : every thing thou paintest is present to the imagination ; even thy silence is full of expression, and full of eloquence. In vain would painting oppose her productions to thine : she can draw a battle, a shipwreck, a doleful scene ; the eye admires the art, but the heart is ignorant of the pleasure. But thou, at thy option, can successively fill the soul with hope or fear, hatred or love, horror or compassion, consternation or joy, and always attended with pleasure.

Now, gentlemen, after producing so many clear titles, will you deny music the right of taking her rank among the useful arts, among the sciences profitable to the state ? is there any within the reach of my voice who can refuse his assent ? No, I see her triumph painted in the unanimity of your looks, I read conviction in your eyes. But as I would

conceal no part of the truth, I must here confess : I know that this science has been grossly abused by depraved minds, has been often profaned, polluted and degraded at the expence of virtue, and to the disgrace of manners ; often prostituted to renew the obscene feasts of Sybaris and Caprea, and those shipwrecks formerly caused on the Tyrenian seas by the perfidious voice of the daughters of Achilous : but shall we not say that such an abuse is the misfortune rather than the fault of this art ? heroic in its origin, and virtuous in its aim, shall we condemn music, because licentiousness has sometimes transferred it to infamous purposes ? I am truly at a loss to know what art would escape, were we to banish every thing that has been abused. The laws are often grossly abused in condemning the innocent and clearing the guilty ; must we therefore shut up the temples of Themis ? the seas are often covered with shipwrecks ; must we therefore burn our ships ? the immoderate use of wine very often produces madness, quarrels, rapes and murders ; must we therefore deny ourselves the juice of the grape ? no, let us reform the abuse : let us bring harmony back to the purity of its source, to the beauties of its youth, to its primitive splendor. To banish music, would be to deprive the state of a delicious bond of union, the republic of letters of a

brilliant ornament, and all nature, of a sensible pleasure.

May this amiable harmony ever reign ; but let her empire never rise on the ruins of manners : shaking off all effeminacy, let Venus and Minerva be her inseparable favorites : may she never lend an ear but to chaste beauties, nor affect any airs but such as are noble and sublime. Sovereign of our hearts, may she never open them but to generous sentiments : queen of the passions, may she never awake them but in the cause of virtue : may she ever be the interpreter of all that is great, true and lovely, the companion of taste, the life of society, and the delight of the world.

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## EPISTLE to his MUSE.

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**V**OLATILE muse, thou amiable for-  
eigners ! thou who charms my sense and leads  
my youthful steps through flowery paths, and  
yet where thorns grow ; if on this vacant  
day, sacred to leisure, thou canst shake off  
thy native indolence ; come unto my arms.  
The voice of wisdom calls me from the noise  
of Parnassus ; and the vain rumors of the  
giddy multitude. Fear not, nor blush to ap-  
pear before a divinity to whom I have conse-  
crated my labours and my life. It is not the  
proud and formal pedant whose sanctity is  
nothing but grimace, whose honor is support-  
ed by words of venerable sound ; the scorn  
of the wise and the idol of fools : no ; it is  
that amiable goddess, adored by the sages of  
the portico, and formed in Cytherea ; who,  
disdaining the pomp art, shines with native  
lustre, whose companions are *truth* and faith-  
ful *liberty* ; it is *virtue* herself in the chariot  
of the graces.

In her presence, in her balance, and be-  
fore your eyes I mean, in sober sadness, to  
weigh the art of poetry ; to form an estimate  
of its intrinsic value, and disclose the real  
sentiments of my heart. But alas ! in what

a gaudy flaunting dress do I see thee? Where  
 dost thou intend to fly, thou little fluttering  
 thing? what brilliant festival inspires thee  
 with transports so uncommon? Perhaps the  
 prospect of my future destiny flatters thee;  
 but tell me sincerely, what is the foundation  
 of thy sanguine hopes? Because I have slipped  
 my neck from the monastic yoke, dost thou  
 imagine that Apollo has engaged me for life  
 to ride post from stage to stage on the Pinda-  
 ric road? Because thou art set at liberty  
 from those leading-strings that restrained thy  
 juvenile gambols, dost thou imagine I am  
 blindly to give a loose to thy poetic flights?  
 If this is thy expectation, I must tell thee  
 that thou deceivest thyself; I must assure  
 thee that I have sworn allegiance to powers  
 of a superior order; for though my fortune  
 be changed my heart is still the same. But  
 let us suppose, for a moment, that this met-  
 amorphosis had taken place; that my reason  
 and senses were actually transformed; and  
 that, enamoured of thy beauties, I had sworn  
 thee an eternal adoration: what must I ex-  
 pect at the altars of such an airy phantom?  
 what canst thou do for me thou capricious  
 idol? If we may be allowed to judge of the  
 future by the past; thou, like thy sisters, no  
 doubt would reward my services with the  
 flattering hopes of a plentiful crop of fame;  
 teeming with the choicest blessings of life.  
 Thy sisters! did I say? Alas! what a harvest

have their greatest favorites reaped ? Vain beauties ! Sweet Syrens ! In every age, have we not seen the lofty vessels of their lovers, wantonly cast away, when lulled asleep by their perfidious song ? Come then, and open before me the records of time ; those monuments of glory and disgrace. I see the names of many famous poets ; but where is the list of the happy ones ? If poets, and men of genius, are the favorites of heaven ; why is their life given as a prey to the teeth of infernal tyrants ? Has Lachesis no golden threads to spin ? Don't I see them every day dress'd up like victims for the slaughter ; who, after the transient glory of passing in review, and feeding the eyes of the gaping crowd ; are condemn'd to perpetual solitude without the enjoyment of life ; banished from the universe, and neglected by their country ; wandering from place to place like that vagabond and ill-fated people, who are every where numerous, and every where strangers ?

Have not the songsters of the Seine given us a more than satisfactory proof of truths so disagreeable ; or must we perambulate the tombs of Athens, or awake the sleeping ashes of the Romans ? Must we call up the brilliant shades of an Orpheus, an Ovid or a Milton ; and impute their strange disgrace to the caprice of fortune or of kings ? No ; there is no need to go so far from home. Our Helicon has been long deserted by the gra

Yes, Calliope in tears still mourns the banishment of her beloved Horace ; breathing to heaven her ardent wishes that this lyric Phoenix, whose early flight graced these climates, would once more return from the Belgic shore to renew his youth and in her arms expire.

Such however is the history of the famous premiums which thy sisters have procured for their greatest admirers ; and shall I be ambitious of thy deceitful favors ! I must confess that, as I have not the talents of these heroes of Parnassus ; my own weakness places me in some measure out of the reach of their misfortunes : but who knoweth this ? A simple *jeu-d' esprit*, misunderstood by some venerable priest, or more venerable prelate, may transport you to another climate ; or point you out as an atheist, the declared enemy of heaven and earth : *one bigot* is able to send twenty wise men to the d—l.

To what strange intoxication then wouldst thou expose the tranquility of my leisure hours ? Ever hast thou been the faithful votary of indolence ; nor did I ever know thee tainted with this poetical madness, unless perhaps in jest for thy amusement ; what fury then possesses thee to make a torment of a pleasure ? Alas ! I see the charm that seduces thee. The novelty of a thousand objects, forbidden in the days of thy servitude solicit thy choice. Placed as thou art in the brill-

int scene of the world ; thou seems emerging from a dark eclipse, to behold a new creation. Wit seems to issue from a thousand springs unknown before ; while new-born pleasures court thy embrace, promising to bear thee on their painted wings to immortality. And to encrease thy frenzy Apollo unlocks his hidden treasures ; displaying to thy view the brilliant symbols of his art. The buskin and the lyre ; the lute of Euterpe ; and the trumpet of Mars ; while another God, perhaps, less suspected, but more treacherous ; puts on a thousand different dresses to deceive thee. Thus at the early dawn, when first she tries her wings ; dazzled betwixt the gifts of Flora and Pomona, the new-fleg'd bird flutters from tree to tree, from bush to bush, now in the woods, now in the flowery meadow, uncertain where to fix, and every where at once.

The case is plain ; thou art incorrigible : thy little bosom heaves with ambition to see thy chariot run the glorious race. But, to prevent a fatal miscarriage, consult the wise Deshouliers ; do but observe in what colours that lady paints the dangers and disgusts that await thee in that course. Suppose thou art proof against those signal disgraces that wait upon the steps of genius ; art thou insensible of that bustle and confusion that attends Apollo's court ? hast thou shaken off that modesty so natural to thy sex ? canst thou bear to be

pointed at in the streets ; to be made the foot of every company ?

When a poor mortal sees himself perhaps involuntarily dragged from the shade, and made the object of the public esteem ; he may then be tempted to applaud his change of fortune : but when he finds that this fruitless praise is the price of his liberty ; how will he change his opinion ! how will he regret his former obscurity ! he has no longer the privilege of writing like a hermit for his amusement ; or pouring his heart into the bosom of friendship : no, friendship itself will now think itself at liberty to betray him without a crime ; and a trifle that never was designed to see the light, but to live and die within the circle of a few friends, will be shamefully exposed to public view ; perhaps to be tried by the rigid laws of criticism.

If, like Horace, he should be so happy as to find some Mæcenæ, or some tender grace : such as a Daphnis, a Themira, or an amiable Eucharis ; who are less studious to find in his writings the wit of the *author*, than the virtues of the *citizen* ; the social philosopher ; who, easy, natural, and unaffected, knows how to put off the buskin ; to shun the ton of the parasite ; the formality of the pedant, and the insipidity of the rimer and buffoon ; yet, what a train of mortifications has he to encounter from another quarter ! wherever fortune leads his wandering steps,

he will find himself, like some strange animal, under the necessity of dragging his chain: wherever he appears, he will find himself exposed to a thousand fops and dunces; who, unable to distinguish the author from the man, will generally take the liberty of addressing him in the poetical stile so much in vogue, till both sides are heartily sick of the entertainment.

These are some of the evils to which thy foolish ambition exposes thee; but self-love, kindly interpoling its veil, conceals from thy view, this picture of futurity; or presents it in a favorable light. This flattering friend, studious to please thee, incessantly whispers in thy ear that the world is charmed with thy essays; and that a public distinguished from the vulgar calls thee to higher attempts. But let me ask thee one question: Dost thou know the mutability of this honorable public? how unsteady in its attachments; how constant in its displeasure? dost thou know that two summers may see thee the idol, and the derision of this variable judge?

In the midst of the ocean; in an enchanted island, where Proteus resides, there is a temple erected by *error*, where brilliant and inconstant *favor* keeps her court. There, with a liberal hand, and with distracted air, she scatters her deceitful promises around; making the fortunes of mankind. Her throne

is supported by airy dreams ; and her moveable altars are carried on the breath of the fickle winds. It is but rarely that reason and justice bring virtuous mortals to pay their adorations there. Opinion, fashion and caprice, open the temple, and name the fortunate heroes ; presenting them with a delicious cup of sparkling nectar ; which, while the Goddess smiles, intoxicates their reason : but if they drink too deep, they find a deadly poison at the bottom. No sooner are they initiated, than active *fame* engraves their names on her luminous car : the world, incubriated with the fumes of incense, is now in raptures ; and smiles upon the happy mortals with all its eyes. Thus, deified, and lulled asleep by the breath of lethargic error, they now taste in golden dreams, the delicious pleasure of seeing the prostrate universe at their levee : but in a moment, inconstant favor taking her flight to another quarter, rude boreas, with all his stormy brethren, breaks in upon the happy sleepers ; and in a whirlwind carries them far from their enchanted island. When they open their eyes, they see nothing but rocks and mountains ; an unknown coast ; a dreary wilderness ; and all their glory forever gone !

Believe me, muse, let who will sacrifice to favor, to esteem, to fame ; let who will lose in the temple of Apollo the few moments we call life ; let who will enlist themselves

among the gilded slaves of honor : as for *me*, nature has made me more ambitious of real happiness than outward show ; nor will I ever lose my liberty for the sake of a few random essays designed chiefly for my own amusement : the spring every where presents us with a profusion of sweet blossoms, an immense variety of beautiful flowers ; but few are destined to bring any real fruit to maturity.

However, I would not have you so interpret my philosophy as if I meant to abjure the empire of poetry : I hate the drudgery, I fear the madness of it ; but I adore its charms. If in my reveries, Bacchus should chance, or some superior power, to guide my steps to where the pure crystal streams of Parnassus descend in murmuring rills to water our world ; it should not be my wish to be taken up in a fiery chariot to those towering heights where the warlike muse, radiant with glory, in a voice like thunder, imparts her mysteries to a Camoens, a Tasso, or a Milton ; no, I should rather pray that some divinity would lead me to that solitary valley where la Fare and Chaulieu ; far from prejudice and restless ambition, near to the Cyprian Goddess, and on a bed of roses, were wont to drink, from the pure source of nature, those harmonious numbers the children of their pleasures ; to those sages, who intoxicated with supreme delight, could

pidly meet the gloomy monarch ; who hand in hand with love could calmly march down to Charon's barque, to the found of the lute, in the steps of the tender Anacreon.

There, if I can discover their track ; if I can find out that native elegance ; that sentimental ton ; that charming negligence which made them the poets of the graces : I shall desire no more than the honor of the sweet myrtle : Apollo may give or take the laurels from me at his pleasure.

What a fool must he be, who, seduced by vain glory, sacrifices the present to grasp at the shadow of futurity ? can all the breath of fame ; all the incense of posterity counterballance the moment I now live in the bosom of liberty ; tasting, in the enjoyment of myself and my friend ; pleasures more substantial than their boasted immortality ? No, let us not waste our golden days in cruel studies, in hopes of producing doubtful miracles : alas ! while we now hold the pencil, time is on the wing ; the fair season passes, Clotho continues to spin, and wind up a multitude of moments for which pleasure will demand an account. To secure our happiness is the voice of nature, and ought to be our first care : when that is done, we may be allowed to amuse ourselves with the lyre ; when beauty in a jovial mood demands a song from the graces.

But whatever rank heaven reserves for me ;  
 whether I follow Thalia or Minerva ; hear  
 me, muse, and listen to the terms on which  
 I allow thee to add poetical numbers to any of  
 my writings.

In undertaking a journey to the double hill,  
 dost thou consider the dangers of the road ?  
 dost thou consider that error, captivating thy  
 senses, and casting a mist before thy eyes,  
 will use all the delusive arts she is mistress of  
 to bewilder thee and lead thee in paths that  
 must end in everlasting confusion ? know  
 then, that in happier days the road to Parnas-  
 sus was safe and easy ; no savage monster  
 haunted the passes ; no poisonous viper lay in  
 ambush to watch the steps of the unwary  
 traveller : it was then the road to Olympus,  
 the temple of wisdom. There the harmoni-  
 ous lyre, and the melodious pipe joined the  
 wisdom of the serpent with the simplicity of  
 the dove : those generous rivals knew not the  
 dangerous art of mixing gall in the ambrosial  
 cup : the zephyrs of those shining hills, ac-  
 customed to the sweet sound of the guitar,  
 had never awaked the echoes with any infa-  
 mous or barbarous notes ; when evoked by  
 the potent charms of vice, two hideous *pec-*  
*tres* rising from the styx, *abscenity* impure,  
 and gloomy *calumny*, audaciously entering  
 those sacred retreats, began to raise their  
 voice in accents unknown. Love wept : the

laurels withered, and the muses fled ; but Apollo, quickly alarmed, and glowing with just resentment ; precipitating these daughters of the night down from the top of the Aonian mount, soon replung'd them in their native infamy ; leaving to the world this instructive lesson : that *virtue*, queen of harmony, and she alone is able to give birth to true poetry.

Thus disappointed of their hopes, and burning with satanic rage, upon the broken cliffs of a steep rock not far from thence, they built their *pandemonium*, the phantom of Parnassus : and there, to encrease the number of their profane adorers, these impure rivals of the chaste sisters, with a censor in their hand full of unhallowed fire, received the precrib'd rhimers who were eternally excluded from the temple of fame. Thus the vile hornet, impotently jealous of the industrious bee, attempts in vain to imitate her nectar, while he extracts the venomous juice of every unclean herb. There it is that the numerous swarm of *obscure satyrists* ; those artists of dullness and obscenity ; nursed by the fumes of hatred or debauchery, forge in the dark their insipid rhimes ; those *scurrilous pamphlets*, those infamous libels, and all that spawn of anonymous monsters with which Battavia threatens to overflow the world.

O shameful prostitution of genius ! what a pity is it that this precious gift ; this

charming art ; this heavenly language that was given us to sing the praises of the Gods, the virtues of the hero, and the beauties of the fair, should be thus degraded by the banditti of Parnassus, into the jargon of megera ; the impure organ of calumny, the advocate of vice and the disgrace of manners ! but such is the fate of our unhappy planet ; that the mild and salutary dews of the morning, descending from heaven to water and refresh the sweet flowers, will often give life and vegetation to noxious plants that contain a mortal poison.

I am persuaded, muse, thou wilt never listen to the song of obscene licentiousness ; thou wilt never sacrifice to that infamous deity : but being naturally too apt to laugh ; perhaps thou may be seduced into the service of satire : O guard against the infection of that cynical humor ! wouldst thou gain the prize of wit to become the horror of society ? wouldst thou part with thy honor to gain the applause of fools ?

I would have a man of genius inspired with a nobler ambition, that of being beloved ; that of seeing his writings, in regions where his name is unknown, expressing the native simplicity of his manners and making every reader his friend ; that of dissipating the mist of vulgar prejudice, and convincing the world that one may please without forfeiting his honor ; reuniting those characters

that ought never to be separated, the elegant writer, the good citizen, and the true patriot.

There is yet another rock that I had almost forgot to mention. While you carefully shun that dangerous gulf where caustic satire, nourishing the fire that devours her, spends the acrimony of her gall ; O ! beware of running on that barren coast where that monster of doubtful sex, the odious *panegyric* reigns : you will easily know her by her emasculated voice, her timid look, and simpering smile ; and still more by the insipid title of her lullaby writings, such as odes to the great and nosegays to the fair ; singing the world asleep. For you must know that the God of taste excludes, from his immortal court, the fawning sycophant and vile flatterer as much as the envious and dark impostor.

Go then, my muse ; for I have done : and may this friendly thread conduct thee safe through that labyrinth where thousands have irrecoverably lost their way. Should the whole troop of invisible critics chance to attack thee, receive their harmless fire with intrepidity ; it cannot hurt thee : keep on thy course, nor dare to look behind thee : answer them not, but leave that care to silent contempt : to return their injurious attacks would only serve to honour them and degrade thyself.

And to enable thee religiously to observe this law ; be sure to keep before thy eyes

the example of that great man whose brilliant youth was crowned by every muse ; and who now retains, in masculine age, the art of being amiable and happy. For many years he was the butt of malice and envy ; who incessantly followed his steps, endeavouring to poison the happiness of his life by engaging him in shameful quarrels and unmanly disputes : but wisely retiring within the intrenchment of a noble silence, he baffled all the schemes of his rivals ; tho' able to conquer, he left them in peace. Thus, when a cloud of crows disturbs the peace of his hermitage, the nightengale in silence leaves the air to their clamorous complaints, waiting with patience till the charming voice of some nymph or shepherdess awakes his passion and animates his song.

Come then, my muse, engrave these maxims on thy heart ; and I shall ever be at thy devotion : fear not the frowns of the great, nor the more dangerous insolence of the multitude. But I still hear the common cry : that there is no Mæcenas to patronize merit. I know well that a dark cloud hangs over the horizon of the literary world : but let us trace the evil up to its source. Can we expect that a more propitious sun should bring back those golden days we so much regret, while we see so many thousands of learned men sacrificing to infernal muses ; when we see them, by a shameful emulation, tearing

one another in pieces, breathing the spirit and language of the furies, and degrading the noble talents that nature has put in their hands ? believe me, muse, the most shining talents, when separated from virtue, are so far from commanding our esteem that they merit our highest detestation. How can he arrive at true glory who pursues it by means that are truly infamous !

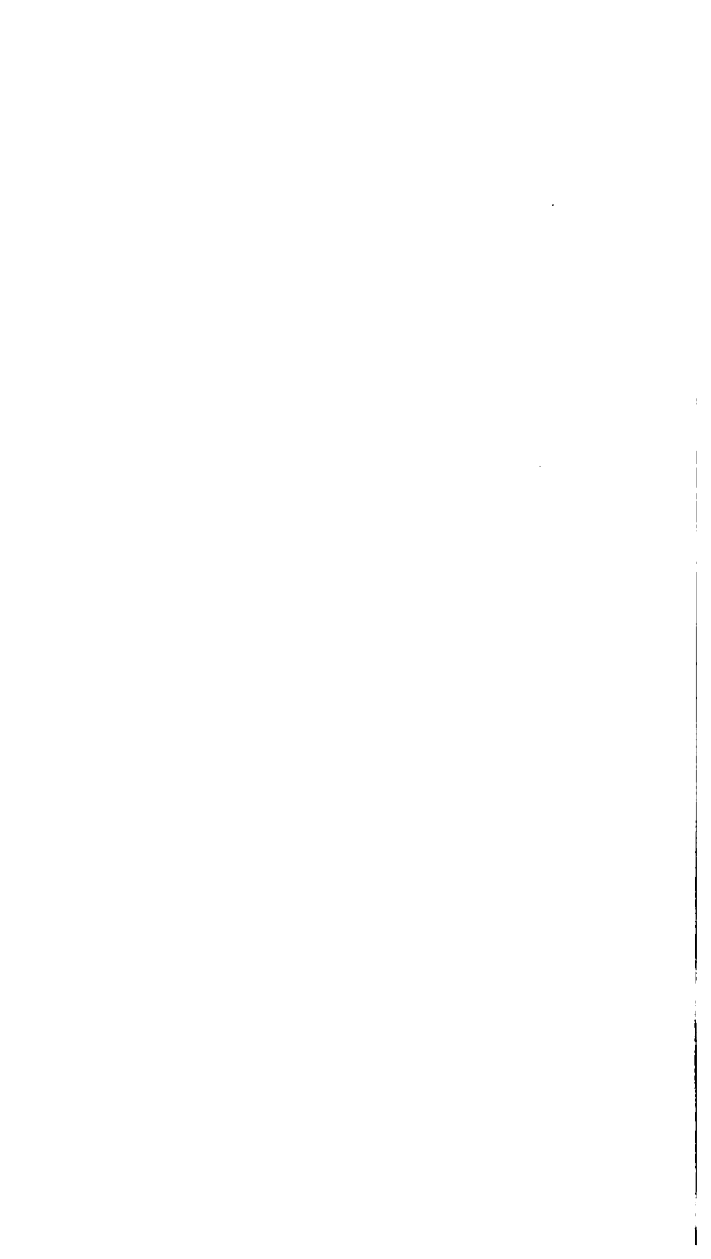
Had men of genius the fortitude to exert their natural powers so as to arise but a few degrees above the infected atmosphere of popular error and party prejudice : would they but consider themselves as one republic of choice spirits sent into our planet for the good of their species ; we should behold a new creation. Instead of meanly contending for the prize of wit ; we should see them fired with the more legitimate ambition of emulating each other in virtue and friendship : instead of wrangling and disputing about words of doubtful sense ; we should see them uniting their honest endeavours in the search of truth, with a firm resolution to embrace it wherever it appears : instead of laying snares for the unwary multitude and sporting with the credulity of their fellow mortals ; we should see them employing their time and talents in works useful and ornamental to society ; we should see them every where turning their united forces vigorously to attack and beat down the fortresses of ignorance,

bigotry and vice, those common enemies of mankind ; we should see Richelieus and Colberts arise in every climate ; in a word we should soon see the arts rising with new lustre from those tombs where now they seem buried in oblivion.

As for thee, muse, while others of stronger wing take a nobler flight ; do thou keep steady in the friendship of virtue and honest pleasure : thou shalt ever be welcome to pay me a visit, either in the dress of a social nymph or sensible shepherdess ; and when thou comest, be sure to bring sweet liberty along with thee, to draw me some smiling pictures, not so much to court applause as to beguile the tedious hours. *J. W. A. 1789*











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